

CHARGING FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS AND REMISSIONS POLICY



HARTFORD
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
HIGH SCHOOL

Ratified by Governing Board:	February 2026
Next Due for Review:	Spring Term 2027

Mission Statement:

Our mission at Hartford Church of England High School is to provide an outstanding, inclusive and ambitious education for all. Children develop and thrive both within and beyond the classroom. They are known, with their talents embraced and promoted. They develop into young people who will make a substantial contribution to the world. They enjoy an education rooted in a shared set of Christian values that radiate the love and truth of Jesus Christ.

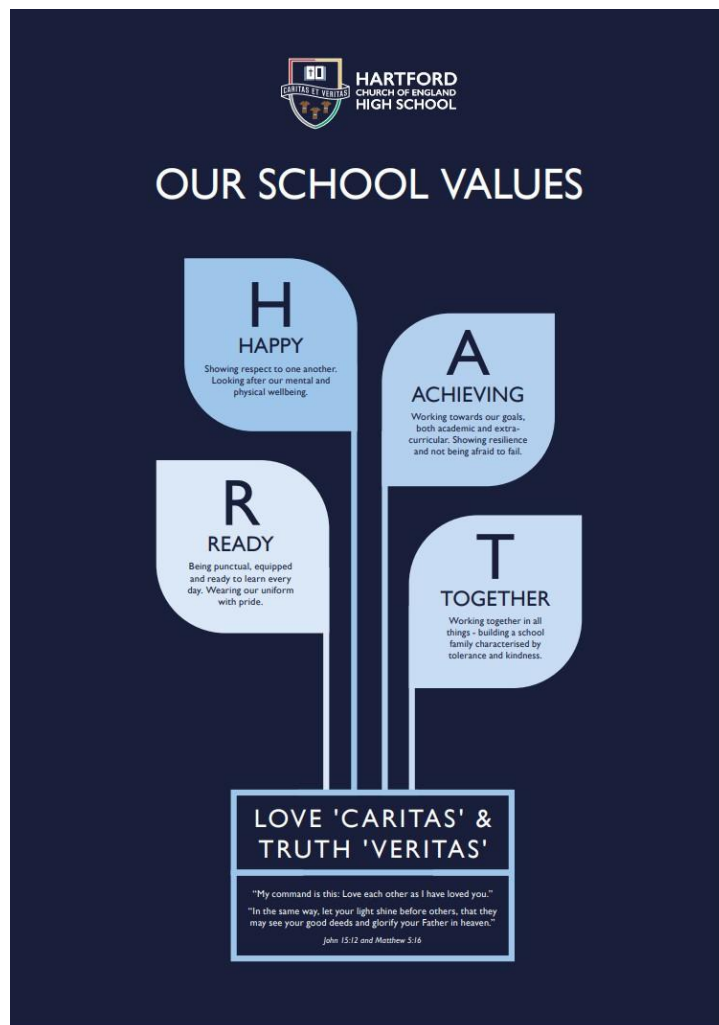
Everything we do at Hartford Church of England High School as students, staff, Governors and wider stakeholders, centres on the core values of our school:

Happy: Showing respect to one another. Looking after our mental and physical wellbeing.

Achieving: Working towards our goals, both academic and extra-curricular. Showing resilience and not being afraid to fail.

Ready: Being punctual, equipped and ready to learn every day. Wearing our uniform with pride.

Together: Working together in all things - building a school family characterised by tolerance and kindness.



"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

John 15:12 and Matthew 5:16

Equally, the educational offer at Hartford Church of England High School is based on the Church of England's four key principles for education:

- Educating for wisdom, knowledge and skills
- Educating for hope and aspiration
- Educating for community and living well together
- Educating for dignity and respect

The Charging for School Activities, Voluntary Contributions and Remissions Policy for Hartford Church of England High School fully embodies our values, our mission statement and the key principles for education set out by the Church of England.

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1. Aims

At Hartford Church of England High School, we are committed to ensuring we have a clear process for charging and remissions, which sets out the types of activities that can be charged for. We aim to offer a range of activities and visits, whilst minimising any financial barriers which may prevent some students from taking full advantage of these opportunities.

2. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'Maintained schools governance guide'.
- DfE 'What maintained schools must or should publish online'.
- The Education Act 1996.
- The Children Act 1989.
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007.
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010.
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- DfE 'Charging for school activities'.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Finance Policy

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions will be used:

Charge: A fee payable for specifically defined activities.

Remission: The cancellation of a charge, partly or wholly, which would normally be payable.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board will be responsible for:

- Reviewing and updating this policy.
- The management of the school's delegated finances.
- Ensuring the school acts in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Ensuring money is spent for the educational benefit of students attending the school, and for the benefit of students in other schools.
- Recognising its legal requirements regarding charging for school activities under the Education Act 1996 and meeting all additional guidance provided by the Department for Education (DfE).

The Headteacher will be responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is effectively implemented.

- Prioritising and allocating financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds.
- Ensure that systems are in place to inform parents/carers on low incomes and in receipt of specific benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.
- Liaising with parents/carers and staff regarding any charges being applied and making decisions regarding appropriate remissions on a case-by-case basis, in liaison with the Business Manager - Finance.

The Finance Department will:

- Process and record payments for activities, taking into account any remissions applied.
- Ensure that the correct invoices are sent to parents/carers, and that payment is received.

5. Charging for Education

The school will not charge for:

- Admission applications.
- Education provided during school hours, including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment required for the teaching of the curriculum.
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for by the school, or part of Religious Education.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for students learning individually or in groups, unless it is an optional activity provided at the request of the student's parents/carers.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it by the school.
- Examination resits, if the student is being prepared for the resits at the school.

The school may charge for:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the student's parents/carers wish their child to own them.
- Optional extras.
- Music tuition (in certain circumstances).
- The use of community facilities and other commercial activities.
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information.

The Governing Board will:

- Endeavour to support any parents/carers in paying for any activity for an individual student if they are experiencing financial difficulties. For example, by agreeing to payment by instalments.
- Inform parents/carers that if they can prove they are in receipt of any of the following state benefits, they will not be charged board and lodging fees for any residential visit:
 - Income Support.
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance.
 - Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
 - The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit.
 - Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190.
 - Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
 - Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive).
- Make funds available from various sources, including Pupil Premium, School Funds and Charitable Donations, to support parents/carers who are unable to pay voluntary contributions.

6. Optional Extras

The school may charge for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time, that is not:
 - Part of the national curriculum.
 - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school.
 - Part of religious education.
- Examination entry fees where the student has not been prepared for the examinations by the school.
- Transport, other than that required to take the student to school or to other premises where the Local Authority has specifically arranged for the student to be provided with education.
- Extended day services offered to students, e.g. after-school clubs, tea, and supervised homework sessions.

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra.
- The cost of buildings and accommodation.
- Non-teaching staff, including Teaching Assistants (TAs).
- Teaching staff under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra.
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided equally by the number of participating students.

Charges applied will not include an element of subsidy for any students wishing to participate but whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the school will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

The school will not charge for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges; therefore, parental agreement is a prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

If a charge is to be made for a particular activity, such as optional extras, parents/carers will be informed of how the charge will be calculated.

7. Voluntary Contributions

The school may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the school will make this clear to parents/carers at the outset. The school will make it clear to parents/carers that there will be no obligation for parents/carers to make any contribution. Parents/carers will be notified regarding whether assistance is available.

No student will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent/carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity and the school will set out how places will be allocated from the outset. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled, and this will be made clear to parents/carers.

The school will strive to ensure that parents/carers do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions. Measures which may make parents/carers feel pressured, such as colour coded letters and direct debit or standing order mandates, will not be sent when the school requests contributions.

8. Examination Fees and Resits

The school may charge for examination fees if:

- The examination is on the set list (which includes SATs, GCSEs and A-levels), but the student was not prepared for it by the school.
- The examination is not on the set list, but the school arranged for the student to take it.
- A student fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the Governing Board or Local Authority originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

Where a student is required by the school to be entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, the school will pay the fee. Once students have left the school, resits must be taken at the school.

If a student or their parent/carer consider it to be in the best interests of the student to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved will be covered by the student or their parent/carer. If the school requires a student's examination paper to be re-marked, any fees involved will be covered by the school. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the school will not be charged by the awarding body, and the parent/carer or student will have their fees refunded

9. Music Tuition

The school is aware that instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the student's parents/carers. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

There will be no charges applied if the music tuition is an essential part of the national curriculum.

No charge for music tuition will be made in respect of students who are looked after by a Local Authority.

10. Transport

The school will not charge for:

- Transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the Local Authority has a statutory obligation to provide the transport.
- Transporting registered students to other premises where the Governing Board or Local Authority has arranged for students to be educated.
- Transporting students to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at the school.

11. Residential Visits

The school will not charge for:

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours.

- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of Religious Education.
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying students on visits.

The school may charge for board and lodging, but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.

Parents/carers will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support.
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance.
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit.
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190.
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive).

The school will provide a form for parents/carers to submit and provide proof of receipt of one of the above benefit payments in order to be eligible for the exemption.

12. Education Partly During School Hours

The school will follow Department for Education (DfE) guidance when determining whether an activity is deemed to take place during school hours or not, as set out below.

In the case of non-residential activities:

- If 50 percent or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours (including time spent travelling if the travel occurs during school hours), it will be deemed to take place during school hours, and no charge will be made.
- If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it will be deemed to have taken place outside school hours and the school may charge for the activity; however, the school will not charge if the activity is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of Religious Education.
- Whatever the start and finish times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. School hours will not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where a visit is residential, if the number of school sessions covered by the visit is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days (any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day) spent on the visit, it will be deemed to have taken place during school hours and the school will not charge for the activity.

The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of the school. These costs will be borne by the school.

Any charges for extended day services will be optional.

13. Damaged or Lost Items

The school may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of students or their parents/carers. Parents/carers will only be charged the replacement cost to

purchase the same or equivalent item. The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

14. Remissions

The school will set aside a fund to enable parents/carers in financial difficulty to send their children on visits and activities. The funding will be limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis, and if the full cost of the trip or activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or activity will be cancelled.

Parents/carers in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- Income Support.
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance.
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit.
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190.
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive).

To request assistance, parents/carers should contact the Finance Department: Finance@hartfordhigh.co.uk.

15. School Trip Refunds

All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents/carers will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a school trip is cancelled by a party other than the school due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents/carers.

In the event that a student or their parents/carers cancel the student's place on a trip, it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the student's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another student.

Where a student or their parents/carers have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school will have the right to refuse to allow the student to attend future trips and visits.

In the event that a student cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the student's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another student.

In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it will be at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents/carers.

In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it will be at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The school will consider its options,

which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents/carers.

Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1 per student.

The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all students and their families are treated equally.

If a parent/carer wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they are able to do so in line with the school's Complaints Policy.

16. Freedom of Information Policy

The school's Freedom of Information Policy will set out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.

17. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually by the Governing Board.

Date approved by Governing Board: Date: 09/02/2026

Applicable from: Date: 09/02/2026

Signed by

Headteacher:

Date: Date: 09/02/26

Chair of Governors:

Date: Date: 09/02/26