



Charging and Remissions Policy

Reviewed Date:	Reviewed By:	List of changes	Next Review
August 2021	Luke Collins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Re-written by Andy Howard 	August 2022
July 2022	Luke Collins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reviewed and amended uniform point 	July 2023
July 2023	Luke Collins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reviewed with no changes 	July 2024
October 2024	Adrian Anderson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reviewed with no changes made 	August 2025
August 2025	Luke Collins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reviewed and updated whole policy 	August 2026

Table of Contents

1. Statement of intent	3
2. Legal framework and guidance	3
3. Definitions	4
4. Roles and responsibilities	4
4.1 The Proprietor	4
4.2 The Head of Education	4
4.3 school administration	5
5. Education and activities for which no charge will normally be made	5
6. Circumstances in which charges may be made	6
6.1 Optional extras	6
6.2 Residential visits	6
6.3 Materials, ingredients and finished products	6
6.4 Music tuition	7
6.5 Examination fees	7
6.6 Damage, loss and breakages	7
6.7 Lost or unreturned items	8
6.8 School meals, transport and additional services	8
6.9 Use of school facilities / lettings	8
6.10 Insurance	9
7. Voluntary contributions	9
8. Remissions	9
8.1 General remission discretion	9
8.2 Residential visits: board and lodging remission	10
8.3 Individual consideration	10
9. School uniform	10
10. Freedom of Information and data protection requests	11
10.1 Freedom of Information requests	11
10.2 Subject access requests	11
11. Refunds	11
12. Equality, SEND and fairness	12
13. Monitoring, review and publication	12
Appendix 1: Summary of charging principles	13

1. Statement of intent

New Direction Independent Special School is committed to ensuring that all pupils have access to a broad, balanced and enriching education. The school recognises the value of educational visits, practical activities, enrichment opportunities and specialist provision in supporting pupils' academic, personal, social and emotional development.

This policy sets out clearly:

- the circumstances in which the school may make a charge;
- the circumstances in which no charge will be made;
- the basis on which voluntary contributions may be requested;
- the circumstances in which charges may be remitted, reduced or waived.

The school aims to apply this policy fairly, transparently and consistently, while taking account of pupils' needs, parental circumstances and the school's duty to use its resources responsibly.

2. Legal framework and guidance

This policy is informed by:

- the Education Act 1996, sections 449 to 462;
- Department for Education guidance: **Charging for school activities**;
- the Education (School Sessions and Charges and Remissions Policies) (Information) (England) Regulations 1999;
- the Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007;
- the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018;
- the Freedom of Information Act 2000;
- relevant funding, contractual and placement arrangements applicable to the school as an independent special school.

Where the school is funded through local authority placements, education, support and services already covered by placement funding and/or parental contractual arrangements will not be charged again.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Charge means a fee payable for a defined activity or service.

Remission means the full or partial cancellation of a charge.

Voluntary contribution means a request for financial support where there is no obligation to pay.

Optional extra means an activity or provision for which a charge is permitted under the school's legal or contractual arrangements and which is not part of the education already funded through the pupil's placement or fees.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Proprietor

The Proprietor is responsible for:

- approving this policy;
- reviewing the policy at least annually;
- ensuring the policy is applied consistently and lawfully;
- considering requests for remission, reduction or waiver of charges where appropriate.

4.2 The Head of Education

The Head of Education is responsible for:

- implementing this policy on a day-to-day basis;
- ensuring parents/carers are informed in advance of any proposed charge or voluntary contribution;
- ensuring that no pupil is treated less favourably because of an inability or unwillingness to pay a voluntary contribution;
- referring exceptional hardship cases to the Proprietor where appropriate.

4.3 school administration

Relevant staff are responsible for:

- calculating charges accurately and fairly;
- issuing clear communications to parents/carers;
- keeping suitable financial records relating to charges, remissions and voluntary contributions.

5. Education and activities for which no charge will normally be made

Subject to the school's placement funding arrangements, contractual arrangements and the limited exceptions set out in this policy, no charge will normally be made for:

- admission to the school;
- education provided during the normal school day;
- education provided as part of the school's agreed curriculum offer;
- education provided as part of preparation for a public examination for which the pupil has been prepared by the school;
- teaching materials, books, equipment and resources used in lessons;
- transport provided by the school where this is necessary to deliver a pupil's placement, curriculum or agreed support package.
- Initial school-provided uniform on admission where this forms part of the school's standard offer. Extra uniform will not be provided by the school.

Where a pupil's placement agreement, EHCP provision, commissioning arrangement or parental contract already covers a service or activity, the school will not make an additional charge for that same provision unless a clearly separate optional service has been requested and agreed in advance.

6. Circumstances in which charges may be made

The school may make charges in the circumstances set out below, provided that parents/carers are informed in advance.

6.1 Optional extras

A charge may be made for optional extras provided wholly or mainly outside the normal school day, where the activity is not part of:

- the education provided to fulfil the pupil's placement or contract;
- any public examination syllabus for which the pupil is being prepared by the school;
or
- religious education, where applicable.

Optional extras may include:

- educational, recreational or leisure visits taking place wholly or mainly outside the school day;
- residential visits or activities which fall outside the funded curriculum offer;
- clubs, experiences or enrichment activities offered on an optional basis.

Any charge for an optional extra will reflect the actual cost of providing the activity and will not be used to subsidise participation by other pupils.

6.2 Residential visits

Where a residential visit is part of the school's curriculum or takes place during school time, the school may charge for **board and lodging only**, where this is permitted by the relevant legal, contractual or funding arrangements.

Where a residential visit is an optional extra, the school may charge the full cost of the visit, including transport, board and lodging, staffing, entrance fees, insurance and any specialist instruction, provided parents/carers are informed in advance.

6.3 Materials, ingredients and finished products

A charge may be made for materials, ingredients or components used in practical subjects, including food technology, art, design or craft activities, where the parent/carer has indicated in advance that they wish the pupil to keep the finished product.

No charge will be made where the product is not intended to be taken home.

6.4 Music tuition

A charge may be made for optional individual or group instrumental or vocal tuition where the teaching is not:

- part of the pupil's funded curriculum entitlement;
- required under the pupil's placement arrangements; or
- provided as part of preparation for a public examination for which the pupil has been entered by the school.

Any such charges will be made clear in advance.

6.5 Examination fees

A charge may be made for examination entry fees where:

- the school has not prepared the pupil for the examination;
- the parent/carer requests entry for an additional qualification or subject that is not supported by the school;
- a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet the requirements of a public examination for which the school has paid the entry fee.

A charge may also be considered where a pupil has been entered for an examination but has not engaged sufficiently with the course requirements, provided this has been made clear to parents/carers in advance wherever possible.

6.6 Damage, loss and breakages

The school reserves the right to seek reimbursement from parents/carers for the cost of repairing or replacing school property, equipment or resources where loss or damage has resulted from a pupil's wilful damage, vandalism or serious negligence.

Any decision to seek reimbursement will take account of the individual circumstances, the pupil's needs, the context of the incident and the principles of fairness and proportionality.

6.7 Lost or unreturned items

The school may charge for the replacement cost of books, devices, equipment, keys, specialist resources or other school property that has been lost or not returned, where this is reasonable in the circumstances.

6.8 School meals, transport and additional services

Where permitted by the pupil's placement agreement, funding arrangement or parental contract, the school may charge for:

- meals not covered by the placement or contract;
- transport not covered by the placement or contract;
- extended day provision, additional supervision or optional services requested by parents/carers;
- photocopying, printing, postage or administrative services where these fall outside the school's normal obligations.

6.9 Use of school facilities / lettings

The school may make charges, at least equivalent to the cost of provision, for the use of school premises, facilities or resources by external organisations or individuals.

Charges for lettings may include:

- premises hire;
- utilities;
- cleaning;
- caretaking or site supervision;
- equipment use;
- administration.

All lettings will be subject to the school's separate lettings arrangements and terms of use.

6.10 Insurance

Where insurance is arranged specifically for an optional visit, activity or residential experience, the cost of that insurance may be included within the charge made for the activity.

7. Voluntary contributions

The school may invite parents/carers to make voluntary contributions towards the cost of:

- trips, visits or enrichment activities;
- transport;
- visiting speakers or specialist providers;
- curriculum enhancement opportunities;
- resources or experiences that benefit pupils.
- Voluntary contributions are entirely optional.

The following principles apply:

- no parent/carer is under any obligation to contribute;
- no pupil will be excluded from an activity because their parent/carer is unable or unwilling to contribute;
- the school will make clear when a request is for a voluntary contribution rather than a charge;
- where there is insufficient funding to make an activity viable, the activity may be cancelled.

8. Remissions

The school is committed to ensuring that charges do not unfairly prevent pupils from accessing appropriate opportunities.

8.1 General remission discretion

The Proprietor may remit, reduce or waive charges, in full or in part, where this is considered appropriate, including in cases of:

- financial hardship;
- exceptional family circumstances;
- safeguarding or welfare concerns;
- a pupil's particular needs or vulnerabilities;
- a decision by the school that remission is in the pupil's best interests.

Parents/carers may apply in confidence to the Head of Education for remission of charges.

8.2 Residential visits: board and lodging remission

Where a charge is made for board and lodging on a residential visit that takes place during school time or is otherwise covered by the relevant charging guidance, the school will consider remission for parents/carers who can demonstrate eligibility through low-income criteria consistent with current government guidance.

The school will set out the availability of such support when writing to parents/carers about the visit.

8.3 Individual consideration

The school may also decide to subsidise or waive charges for individual pupils or groups of pupils where this supports attendance, inclusion, wellbeing or equality of access.

9. School uniform

The school expects pupils to wear school uniform where this is part of the school's expectations and safeguarding arrangements.

The school will ordinarily provide an initial set of uniform items for pupils on admission as part of the school's standard offer. The school also operates a uniform recycling or exchange system to support families and reduce waste.

Where additional or replacement items are required, the school will make clear whether these will be provided by the school or need to be funded by parents/carers.

10. Freedom of Information and data protection requests

10.1 Freedom of Information requests

The school will comply with its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Single copies of information that the school is required to make available will normally be provided free of charge where appropriate. The school may charge for disbursements or reasonable administrative costs, for example photocopying, printing or postage, where permitted by law.

10.2 Subject access requests

The school will comply with its obligations under UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 in relation to subject access requests.

In most cases, the school will not charge a fee for responding to a subject access request. However, a reasonable fee may be charged where a request is manifestly unfounded or excessive, or where further copies of the same information are requested, as permitted by data protection law.

Any fee will be communicated to the requester in advance.

11. Refunds

Where a charge has been paid for an activity that does not go ahead, the school will consider refunds in light of the costs already incurred.

- Full or partial refunds may be made depending on:
- whether the school has already committed expenditure;
- whether third-party costs are recoverable;
- the reason for cancellation;
- the terms set by any external provider.

Refund decisions will be made fairly and communicated clearly.

12. Equality, SEND and fairness

In applying this policy, the school will have regard to:

- the needs of pupils with SEND;
- equality of access to education and enrichment;
- safeguarding considerations;
- the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

The school will seek to avoid financial barriers preventing pupils from participating in appropriate school experiences wherever reasonably possible.

13. Monitoring, review and publication

The Proprietor will review this policy at least annually and sooner where there are changes to legislation, guidance or school practice.

This policy will be made available to parents/carers on request and published in accordance with the school's usual policy publication arrangements.

Appendix 1: Summary of charging principles

Area	Position
Education during the normal school day	No charge will normally be made, unless a clearly separate optional service sits outside the placement/contractual offer
Optional extras outside the normal school day	Charge may be made
Residential visits in school time	Board and lodging may be charged where permitted
Residential visits that are optional extras	Full cost may be charged
Materials/ingredients for items kept by pupils	Charge may be made where agreed in advance
Public examination entries	Charge may be made in limited circumstances
Voluntary contributions	May be requested, but are not compulsory
Remission	Full or partial remission may be granted at the school's discretion
Subject access requests	Usually free; fee only in limited lawful circumstances
Lettings / external use of facilities	Charge may be made