



# **CHARGES AND REMISSIONS POLICY**

**Priestley Smith Specialist VI School**

**February 2024**

Policy review date: February 2026

Policy status: Non Statutory

Responsible member of SLT: Joanna Garvey Headteacher

## Aims

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Priestley Smith School is committed to the rights of the child as outlined in the UN Convention and is working towards Rights Respecting Schools Gold award. This belief influences everything the school does and impacts upon all our policies.

**Article 3** The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.

**Article 23** A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and independence, and to play an active part in the community.

**Article 28** Every child has the right to an education.

The aims of this Charges and Remissions Policy are to:

- To make school activities accessible to pupils regardless of family income;
- To provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school and;
- Which acknowledges the cost of such activities to the school's budget.

## RATIONALE

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The Governing Body of Priestley Smith School recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including educational visits, clubs and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education.

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

## CONTEXT

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The law states that education provided during school hours must be free. This definition includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by the School. No pupil may be left out of an activity because their parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.

### 1. Admissions

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#### **There is no charge for admissions**

### 2. School meals

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There is no charge for children who are entitled to free school meals or infant free school meals. Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a daily set amount in accordance with the school meal providers.

### 3. Public examinations

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There is no charge for examinations that are part of the curriculum and on the school's set examinations list, where pupils have been prepared for the examinations by the school. However, if the pupil fails without good reason to meet an examination requirement, the school may recover the fee incurred from the pupil's parents. This includes re-sits.

*There is a charge of the examination entry fee (s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at the school (see Optional Extras in Section 6 below).*

### 4. Activities that take place during school hours (this does not include the break in the middle of the school day or school visits)

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There is no charge for core curriculum activities during school hours with the exception of music tuition (section 8).

There is no charge for transport during school hours to essential school-organised activities except for organised school trips.

## We may charge for:

- books and materials or sports or musical instruments that the parent wishes the child to keep (the cost will be made clear to the parents before charge)
- optional extras (section 6)

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- music or vocal tuition as part of a group or as an individual (section 8)
- sports coaching
- theatre or performance activities

### **5. Activities that take place outside of school hours (non residential)**

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There is no charge for activities that take place outside of school hours when they are:

- part of the set curriculum, *including sports matches against other schools*
- part of the syllabus for a public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school
- part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education

### **6. Optional extras**

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*The school will charge for optional extras.*

*Optional extras are:*

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
  - a) part of the National Curriculum
  - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
  - c) part of religious education
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- transport that is not taking the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing body has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education.
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit

#### **The cost of optional extras**

The Head Teacher will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities, including trips and transport.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. In no circumstances, will there be an element of subsidy required for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge (section 12).

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

- any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- non-teaching staff
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra
- the cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be based on parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The school will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

### **7. Activities that take place *partly* school hours either on or off site**

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Where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place during school hours the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in section 4 above. Travelling time is included in time spent on activity.

In cases where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place outside of school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. So no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a visit.

In this case the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in section 5.

## 8. Residential activities

### **Our 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit
- travel costs where the residential activity is classed as being within school hours
- residential activities that take place during school hours.

### **Our school will charge for:**

#### **Board and lodging**

When any visit has been organised by the school where there may be a cost for board and lodging, parents will be informed of this before the visit takes place. *We will charge anything up to the full cost of board and lodging on residential visits, whether it is classified as taking place during school hours or not.* The charge will not exceed the actual cost. **Parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from paying this cost (see section 12 for more guidance on remissions) and charitable support may be obtained to subsidise costs for all parents.**

#### **Travel**

Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside of school hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per pupil. These charges may not apply to those pupils entitled to remissions, but no other pupils will be charged extra to cover those costs.

#### **Activities**

The school may charge for residential activities that fall outside of normal school hours (see section 5).

## 9. Music tuition within school hours

Our school follows government legislation that states that all education provided during school hours must be free; however, music lessons (group or individual) are an exception to this rule.

**Charges will be made if** the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s). The school may charge for teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given to either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument.

**The school will not charge if** the music tuition is part of the National Curriculum or public examination syllabus being followed by the student. *This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.*

Priestley Smith School is dedicated to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils including access to specialised music tuition, therefore charges made for music tuition within school hours will be remitted for pupils on free school meals.

There is no charge for vocal or instrumental tuition for children in care. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees. Support is also provided for other parents to apply for financial support from charities such as the Amber Trust to help pay for specialist music tuition.

## 10. Extended services

Priestley Smith School is dedicated to providing a well-rounded and extensive education for our students, which includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities (extended services). We believe that these activities support and extend pupil engagement and improve overall outcomes.

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Due to the transport arrangements for our students, most of these activities take place during lunchtime clubs and activities. As these activities take place during the school day, these activities do not usually incur any additional cost.

### 11. Damage to property and breakages

Where a student or parent of the school has wilfully or recklessly damaged school property, the school may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of repair or replacement.

Where a pupil has damaged property belonging to a third party, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible. Whether these charges will be made will be decided by the headteacher, dependent upon the situation.

### 12. Remissions and concessions

The school will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the following support payments:

- Income Support
- Income based Job-seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (where the person is not receiving Working Tax Credit as well)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Universal Credit

Children of families who receive these payments are also entitled to free school meals. Parents who are eligible for the remission of charges will be approached confidentially.

The Head Teacher will authorise the remission of charges.

The school may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment. This will be determined by the governing body and Head Teacher.

### 13. Voluntary contributions

The School may ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions to the school for general funds and/or to fund activities that will enrich our pupils' education.

Voluntary contributions may be requested from parents to cover the cost of the following activities:

- Theatre visits
- Entrance fees to museums, places of interest etc.
- Transport costs to places of interest
- Costs of curriculum visitors to school e.g. African drumming, Roman soldier, storyteller etc.

In any case, where an activity cannot take place without voluntary funding, parents/carers will be notified by the school. If the activity is cancelled, all monies paid by parents/carers will be refunded.

There is no obligation for a parent or carer to make any contribution to the school.

### 14. Inability or unwillingness to pay

Priestley Smith School is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all pupils, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that child are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, it will be cancelled.

The identity of any child or parents of any child who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

