

The Golden Thread Alliance

Charging & Remissions Policy

Date Reviewed	<i>Summer 2026</i>
Next Review Date	<i>Summer 2027</i>

This policy has been adopted by all schools within The Golden Thread Alliance



As united as we are different.

The Golden Thread Alliance recognises the importance of outstanding teaching and learning by actively encouraging creativity and innovation, whilst having consistent standards of behaviour and attendance. Through the Trust's values, treating everyone as equal, whilst celebrating diversity, is non-negotiable; protecting all through safeguarding, health and safety and welfare is paramount.

All our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' and carers' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities are offered, whilst at the same time minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of the opportunities.

The information in this policy complies with the legislation provided for in the Education Act 2011.

The Golden Thread Alliance will make no charges for:

- An admission allocation to the school;
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the Curriculum, or part of a syllabus of a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments, providing the tuition is required as part of the Curriculum, or part of a syllabus of a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;

Activities for which charges can be made by The Golden Thread Alliance:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child's parent and carer's wish them to be brought home and kept e.g. completed work produced in cookery classes;
- Optional extras (see below)
- Music tuition, but only where the teaching is not an essential part of either the Curriculum, or part of a syllabus of a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school.

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as "optional extras". Where an optional extra is being provided a charge may be made for providing materials, instruments or equipment. Optional extras include:

Education provided outside of school time that is not:

- Part of the Curriculum
- Part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
- Part of religious education

Examination entry fees if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination at the school;

- Transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where The Golden Thread Alliance has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education;
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit.

In calculating the cost of these 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 colleagues;
- Teaching colleagues engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- The cost for teaching colleague employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

The 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. It will not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents and carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Participation in any optional extra will be on the basis of parent and carer choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parent and carer agreements will therefore be a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Voluntary Contributions

The Golden Thread Alliance may request voluntary contributions from parents and carers for the benefit of the school or any school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, The Golden Thread Alliance will make this clear to parents and carers at the outset. It will, however, also be made clear to parents and carers that there is no obligation to make a contribution.

No child shall be excluded from an activity simply because their parents and carers are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it may be cancelled. If a parent or carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given equal chance to go on the visit.

Residential Visits

The Golden Thread Alliance will not charge for:

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside of school hours if it is part of the Curriculum, or part of a syllabus of 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.

The Golden Thread Alliance will charge for:

- Board and lodging but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.
- Education partly during school hours

- Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, the following basis will be used for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours.

Non-residential activities

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours will not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

Residential visits

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours. A "half day" means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Example 1: Visit during school hours

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place in school hours.

Example 2: Visit outside school hours

Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

Additional considerations

In order not to place an unnecessary burden on family finances, the school will also adhere to the following guidelines:

Where possible, trips will be published at least one month in advance; and

A system has been established which allows parents and carers to pay instalments for residential trips.

Any charges made for activities are set to recover cost rather than to generate profit.

In practice, a small surplus can occur unintentionally due to:

- Final travel costs were lower than expected,
- More pupils attending than forecast,
- A contingency amount wasn't needed,
- Rounding of contributions resulted in a small balance.

The level below which a refund is impractical is £3.00 per pupil. In these circumstances the residual would be viewed as an accounting outcome and would be retained on a restricted basis for pupil benefit.

If the surplus is above £3.00 per pupil, the school will either:

- Reduce the contribution for future trips,
- Return money where practical,
- Seek parent or carer consent to treat the profit as a donation, or
- Use the surplus to offset the costs of other educational visits that occurred in that academic year.



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As united as we are different.