



## Esland North Limited

# ED0016DON - Charges, Voluntary Contributions, Remissions & Refunds



## Introduction

This policy applies to Esland Doncaster School, an independent special school. It reflects good practice aligned with Department for Education (DfE) guidance on charging for school activities and is informed by the Education Act 1996 (sections 449–462). While those sections do not apply directly to independent schools, the school has chosen to align with them to ensure transparency, fairness and equity.

Legal context clarification: Charges, remissions and refunds are governed by placement agreements with local authorities, the Children and Families Act 2014 (SEND), and contract law. Where a pupil is placed by a local authority under an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, the local authority is responsible for funding all educational provision specified in the plan. Parents/carers will not be charged for any provision required to meet assessed special educational needs.

## Aims and Objectives

To set out clearly what activities and services may be charged for, what cannot be charged for, and the circumstances under which remissions may apply, in the context of an independent special school.

### We aim to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions.
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will and will not be made in addition to agreed placement.
- Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some students
- from taking full advantage of these opportunities.

## Definitions

**Charge:** a fee payable for specifically defined activities.

**Remission:** the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable.

## Roles and Responsibilities

**The Proprietor/Board of Directors:** Hold ultimate responsibility for approving this policy and ensuring compliance with the Independent School Standards.

**The Governing Body:** Has overall responsibility for the implementation of the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

**Headteacher:** Responsible for day-to-day implementation and ensuring consistent application.

**Staff:** Implement this policy consistently and seek clarification where uncertainty arises

**Parents:** May raise queries or concerns regarding charges and remissions.

## Charges that Will Not Be Made

The school will not charge parents/carers for any educational provision that:

- Is specified within a pupil's EHC plan.
- Forms part of the agreed local authority placement fee
- Constitutes educational provision delivered as part of the curriculum during the school day
- Relates to public examination entry where the pupil has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Is required transport to deliver the education agreed with the local authority

## Charges That May Be Made

The school may levy charges for services or activities that fall outside the scope of the agreed educational placement, including:

- Optional extras provided outside the school day and outside the curriculum
- Extended services
- Board and lodging for residential visits, limited to actual cost
- Musical or instrumental tuition provided at parental request and not required by the curriculum or EHC plan
- Parental agreement will be obtained in advance for all chargeable activities.

## Voluntary Contributions

The school may invite voluntary contributions to support enrichment or additional activities. There is no obligation to contribute, and no pupil will be excluded due to non-payment. Activities may be cancelled if insufficient funding is raised.

## Remissions

Remissions are discretionary and non-statutory. The proprietor may agree to remit charges in individual circumstances, including financial hardship. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

## Monitoring Arrangements

On behalf of the proprietor, the Education Director, Headteacher and Education Support Manager for Education monitors charges and remissions and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the Education Director, Headteacher and Education Support Officer for Education annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.