



Sandal Castle VA Primary Charging and Remissions Policy

Approved by: Resources
Committee

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1. Aims

Sandal Castle Primary School believes that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and educational visits, regardless of their financial means. This policy aims 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
- Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on [charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996](#), sections 449 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

It's also based on guidance from the DfE on [statutory policies for schools and academy trusts](#).

3. Definitions

- **Charge:** a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- **Remission:** the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The governing board

The governing board has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

The governing board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

4.2 Headteachers

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the headteacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The school will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4 Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we **cannot** charge for:

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- 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 National Curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as an essential part of the National Curriculum.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated

5.3 Residential visits

- 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
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
 - Supply teachers, covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying pupils on a residential visit

5.4 Swimming

The school has its own swimming pool and pupils in KS2 will have the opportunity to swim during the normal school day on a rota basis. Parents will be notified by their teachers which term they will be swimming. No charges are made for this activity.

6. Where charges can be made

Below we set out what we **can** charge for:

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Optional extras (see section 6.2)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 6.3)
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school **and** the pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus

6.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
 - The National Curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

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
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- 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 an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

6.3 Music tuition

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent (services signed up for where tuition is an optional extra).

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the National Curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority
- For a pupil who is entitled to free school meals

6.4 Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

7. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities which would not otherwise be possible.

Activities for which the school may ask parents for voluntary contributions are not exclusive to but may include:

Educational visits, materials for additional craft activities, refreshments at school events, out of school activity clubs, experience days within school.

When organising educational visits to enrich the curriculum and educational experience of children, the school will invite parents to make a contribution to the costs.

There is no obligation for parents to make a contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. All children will still be given a chance to engage in visits and activities in school.

If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled and may reduce the range of opportunities we are able to offer in future.

8. Activities we charge for

The governing body reserves the right to charge for the following activities:

1. Breakfast club and After School Care

These costs reflect the cost of staffing the provision, the activities and the food provided.

2. Late collection charges – if parents are late to collect a child after school, they will be given 5 minutes grace, after which the child will go to after school club where charges for childcare will be applied at the usual rate.
3. Loss, Damage & Breakages

In cases of loss, damage or breakages of school books, furniture or equipment, damage or breakage of staff clothing or personal possessions, the school reserves the right to charge for the cost of replacements/ repair.

9. Remissions

Where the parent of a child are unable to meet one of the charges the school can apply in confidence to either the Headteacher for the remission of charges in part or full. The headteacher can make authorisation of the remission and will report all such instances to the resources committee. In some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

9.1 Remissions for residential visits

Children who are looked after by the local authority and those whose parents can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- 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 you're 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 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if you apply on or after 1 April 2018, your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)
- Individual circumstances notified to school

10. Monitoring arrangements

The School business manager will monitor charges and remissions, and ensure these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher annually.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the resources committee.

Appendix 1

Payment for Charge Sessions

1. Initial Overdue payment and first reminder

If a payment has not been made when due, admin staff will contact parents via Arbor or by phone within the first week. No further school meals may be taken if there are arrears on the school meal account and no further wraparound sessions will be able to be booked if there is no credit on the account.

2. Second written overdue payment reminder

If payment is not made within the first week, a further reminder via Arbor and/or phone call will be made and a new deadline of clearing the debt owed will be set (usually within 2 weeks). If music tuition invoices remain in arrears, future lessons will be cancelled at this stage.

3. Failure to settle the debt

Should the balance remain outstanding after the extended deadline or when a payment plan period ends, a meeting with either the School Business Manager or Headteacher will be arranged. This will give parents an opportunity to discuss any financial hardship or difficulties in repaying the arrears on their account. Parents will be given the opportunity to break the payments down into more manageable instalments within a reasonable settlement period.

If the debt is not cleared within the reasonable time limits set, school reserves the right to refer the monies owing to the Council's Debt Recovery unit.

4. Reporting of outstanding debt levels

The SBM will ensure that the level of outstanding debt is monitored each half term. Records will be maintained by the senior admin officer of outstanding individual debt and the total owed to school. This will be reported to the resources committee of the governing body 3 times a year.