



CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY

Please note that, while the DfE's 'Charging for school activities' guidance is advisory, all schools are required to have a Charging and Remissions Policy, in accordance with the DfE's "Statutory policies for schools and academy trusts".

Version	Date	Amended by	Comments	Approved	Review Date
V2.0	Oct 24	M Davies	Changed from Charging Policy to Charging and Remissions policy. Inclusion of an aim in the introduction. Inclusion of Remission definition. Changed year groups for swimming. Standardised formatting. Added DFE statement Added legal and policies		Oct 26

SOUTHROP C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHARGING POLICY

October 2024

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Introduction

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review.

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

All the education we provide during normal school hours is at no charge to pupils. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum, with the exception of some individual or small-group music tuition.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2024) 'Maintained Schools Governance Guide'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Debt Recovery Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Freedom of Information Publication Scheme
- Finance Policy

Charging for education

Parents will not be charged for:

- Admission applications.
- Education provided during school hours.
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of RE.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, unless provided at the request of the pupil's parent.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school.
- Examination resits, if the pupil is being prepared for the resits at the school.

We may charge parents for the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where they desire their child to own them
- Optional extras
- Music tuition (in certain circumstances)
- Vocational tuition (in certain circumstances)
- Certain early years provision
- Use of community facilities
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information.

Optional extras

We may charge parents for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - Part of the national curriculum
 - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - RE
- Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at the school
- Transport, other than that arranged by the LA for the pupil to be provided with education
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils

When calculating the cost of optional extras, the school will only take into account the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the cost, of the following:

Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra

- Buildings and accommodation

- Employment of non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff (including TAs) under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
- Teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument

The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils. A subsidy will not be charged for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. If a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the school will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

The school will not charge for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges; therefore, parental agreement is a prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra.

If a charge is to be made for a particular activity, such as optional extras, parents will be informed of how the charge will be calculated.

Examination fees and resits

The school may charge for examination fees if:

- The examination is on the prescribed list (which includes SATs, GCSEs and A-levels), but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school.
- The examination is not on the prescribed list, but the school arranged for the pupil to take it.
- A pupil fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing board or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the fee.

Where a pupil is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, the school will pay the fee. Once pupils have left the school, resits must be taken at the school.

If a pupil or their parent consider it to be in the best interests of the pupil to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved must be covered by the pupil or their parent. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the school will not be charged by the awarding body and the parent or pupil will have their fees refunded.

Voluntary contributions

When organising school trips or visits to enrich the curriculum and the educational experience of the children, the school invites parents and carers to contribute to the cost. All contributions are voluntary. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents or carers have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. Sometimes the school pays additional costs in order to support the visit. Parents and carers have a right to know how each trip is funded, and the school provides this information on request.

The following is a list of additional activities, organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents and carers. These activities are known as 'optional extras'. This list is not exhaustive:

- visits to museums;
- sporting activities which require transport expenses;
- outdoor adventure activities;
- visits to or by a theatre company;
- school trips abroad;
- musical events.

Residential visits

If the school organises a residential visit in school time, or mainly in school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, we do not make any charge for the education or travel expenses. However, we do suggest a charge to cover the costs of board and lodging, please see the Remissions section for families who are exempt from this charge. In order to help parents to manage the cost we request the payment in instalments. If we cannot raise sufficient funding through these voluntary contributions, the visit may have to be cancelled, and that aspect of the curriculum would have to be covered in other ways.

Music tuition

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this.

There is a charge for individual or small-group music tuition, since this is an additional curriculum activity, and not part of the National Curriculum. These individual or small-group lessons are taught by peripatetic music teachers. A charge is made for these lessons directly by the teacher to the parent, please see the Remissions section for families who are exempt from this charge. We give parents and carers information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year.

Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for children Year 2 and 3 and in Year 5 and 6. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for this activity, but we do ask for a voluntary contribution from parents and carers to cover the cost of transport. We inform parents and carers when these lessons are to take place, and we seek the written permission of parents or carers for their children to take part.

After School Clubs

The school offers an after school childcare facility. This is outside the curriculum and is offered on a commercial basis. The current charges can be provided on request to the school office.

PTA Support

Occasionally the PTA is able to make a significant contribution to the costs of providing an activity (such as paying the cost of a coach to transport the pupils). In such circumstances, the Head Teacher will inform parents/carers of such contributions when asking for parents/carers to voluntarily contribute to meet the remaining costs.

Remissions

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which charges will be reduced or waived for residential visits and music tuition:

Parents or carers of children in receipt of Free School Meals.

Parents or carers in receipt of:

- 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 that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's annual gross income does not exceed £19,995)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (this is paid for 4 weeks after an individual stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit) 7
- Universal Credit (if the application was made on or after 1 April 2018, the family's income must be less than £7,400 per year – after tax and not including any benefits)

Families not in receipt of the benefits listed above, but who nonetheless feel unable to pay due to financial constraints:

- Parents in this category should discuss their concerns about charges with one of the Co-Head Teachers.
- Decisions about remission will be made on a case by case basis.

Equalities

This policy has been written to take into account the needs of all regardless of age, disability, race, religion, belief and gender. In respect of adults this list also includes gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity or paternity and sexual orientation.

Values

Our twelve school values underpin the life of the whole school community. Those particularly pertinent to charging are:

Generosity. We seek to be generous when we offer financial help to those families which need it.

Compassion. We will be compassionate for those who are less well-off and can benefit from our support.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the governing body, and will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if necessary.