

Sandford Hill Primary School

# Charging and Remissions Policy



School website: [www.sandfordhill.org.uk](http://www.sandfordhill.org.uk)

Email: [office@sandfordhill.org.uk](mailto:office@sandfordhill.org.uk)

## **Introduction**

The Head Teacher and Governing Body recognise the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend pupils' learning and to contribute to their personal development. The Head Teacher and Governing Body aims to promote and provide such experiences for the pupils of the school, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities.

However, many of these activities have an associated cost and cannot be provided unless voluntary contributions are received.

This policy will set out the circumstances in which charges will or will not be made for school activities and when charges may be waived in order to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit from school visits, curricular and extra-curricular activities.

It also includes our arrangements and procedures for:

- collecting contributions for activities;
- charging for school dinners; and
- 15 hours nursery provision.

## **Statement:**

The policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1996 and Government Guidance dated May 2018.

Where 'parent' is referred to this will include adults with a responsibility for the pupil.

We aim:-

- To make school activities accessible to all pupils regardless of family income;
- To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum;
- To provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school;
- To respond to the wide variations in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.

## **Legislation – Education During School Hours**

The DfE, in its guidance to School Governors, states that “education provided during school hours must be free. The definition of “education” includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by school to carry pupils between the school and an activity.” It goes on to advise that “although schools cannot charge for school time activities, they still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind)”.

When additional costs are incurred by Sandford Hill Primary School to enhance the curriculum opportunities for the pupils, parents may be requested to make voluntary contributions. However, no pupil will be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.

## **Education Outside School Hours**

The DfE in its guidance to School Governors states that “Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or religious education. No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved

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examination. Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The Education Reform Act 1988 described activities, which can be charged for as “optional extras”.

### **Remissions**

To ensure that access to activities reflects intentions, Sandford Hill Primary School will implement the following Remissions Policy. The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils gain fully from everything that the school is able to offer them and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. This policy takes into account the very real and persistent difficulties which people on low income have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their children.

Where a child is known to us as receiving free school meals or is Ever6, the Governing Body will request a voluntary contribution of 25%<sup>(1)</sup> of the total cost of board and lodgings for any residential activity that the school organised for the pupil, if the activity is deemed to take place within school hours.

There may be cases of severe family hardship which make it difficult for pupils to take part in other particular activities for which a charge is made. When arranging a chargeable activity the Governing Body will invite parents to apply in confidence for the remission of charges in part or in full. Authorisation of remission will be made by the Head Teachers.

### **Data Protection of pupils and families**

Teachers will ensure that these children are not publicly identified and stigmatised. This is particularly important as the fear of stigmatisation is often a key element in the non-take up of Free School Meals. This is accomplished by our online payment system for collecting voluntary charges or dinner money, which do not identify children who do not contribute. This alleviates the need for children to be involved at all.

### **Contributions**

Voluntary contributions may be requested to help with providing activities even though they may be part of the normal school day or part of the National Curriculum.

If voluntary contributions are requested for an activity it should be clearly understood that there is no obligation to contribute and that if the parent is unable or unwilling to pay, the child will not be excluded from the activity.

**However, in the unlikely event that insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit or event, and the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it may be cancelled.**

- The amount of contribution will not be more than the cost of the transport and entrance.
- Where events require support through voluntary contributions, they will generally be available to all pupils. Should, on occasion, an event requiring voluntary contributions be limited in numbers, e.g. a particular extra-curricular activity, acceptance will be made with no bearing as to whether a contribution has been or can be made.
- All monies must be paid online using the ParentMail payment system.
- Children will not be publicly challenged over lack of payment, parents will be contacted if necessary.

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge for the activities and items detailed below:

- Trips/activities - which are not part of the school curriculum or are outside the school day (i.e. Weekend residential);

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- School Clubs – where costs for materials that pupils will take home are incurred or where external providers are used;
- Music tuition - see below
- Repeated loss or malicious damage to school property - see below
- Residential activities requiring board and lodging – see below
- 15 hrs unfunded Nursery provision - see below.

#### **Individual Music Tuition**

- Where appropriate, charges may be made to parents for individual tuition in playing any musical instrument, even if such tuition takes place during school hours. Parental agreement and a signed contract will be obtained before the tuition is provided.

#### **Materials or Ingredients for Practical Subjects**

- Where materials are required at minimal cost (below £30 for the entire activity costs), the school will fund the activity. For more costly activities, parents are encouraged to provide ingredients, materials, etc. needed for practical subjects, such as Technology, where appropriate. The Governing Body may charge for, at cost or less, or require the supply of, ingredients and materials if parents have indicated, in advance, their wish to own the finished product.

#### **Lost School Equipment, Books, etc.**

- Parents will only be expected to replace or pay for the cost of lost items of school property when it is deemed to be by deliberate action or through repeated lack of responsible use.

#### **Breakages and Damage to School Buildings, Furniture or Property**

- Parents will be charged for the cost of replacing any item, such as a broken window, a defaced, damaged or lost book, or a broken ICT resource, where the damage caused is as a direct result of a pupil's deliberate misbehaviour.

#### **Residential Activity**

- The DfE, in its guidance to School Governors, states that “For a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or essential to the education provided at the school, no charge may be made for either the education or the costs of the travel.”
- However, charges will be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for pupils who are known to us as receiving free school meals or Ever6, who will be asked to make a contribution of 25%<sup>(1)</sup> of the total cost. A voluntary contribution will be requested by the school for such activities.

<sup>(1)</sup> This figure will be reviewed annually.

(Sandford Hill Primary School will follow the relevant legislation set by gov.uk <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities>).

#### **15 hours Nursery Payment Charging Procedures**

Schools are funded for 15 hours morning nursery provision, but receive no automatic funding for the 15 hours afternoon sessions. Currently, until September 2027, afternoon sessions are available **at no cost** to parents. This is reviewed annually by Governors and will take effect from the September thereafter.

Schools are obligated to share the following information should the decision ever be made to charge. As stated previously, currently, the additional 15 hours in an afternoon are available **at no cost** to parents.

If school moved onto charging parents, the system would be as follows:

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- afternoon sessions are charged at a rate of £25.00 per full week.
- Charges for part weeks, e.g. with a bank holiday or staff training day will be adjusted accordingly.
- Charges for prolonged absence through illness or forced school closure, e.g. pandemics, will be adjusted accordingly.
- Full fees are charged for any weeks shortened by absence, which includes sickness, snow days and holidays in term time.
- Fees are payable through ParentMail at least one week in advance.
- Where repeated upfront payment has not been made and a debt has occurred, children will not be allowed to stay for the afternoon session.
- Where parents/carers are finding payment difficult to manage, then they may be invited to apply in confidence for a remission, as per the remissions section above. Consideration will be made primarily to meet the individual needs of the child.
- Fees do not include lunchtime meals.

From September 2022

- In order for us to provide a high-quality learning experience to all 3 and 4 year olds, we offer the afternoon sessions at no cost. We are however reliant for additional funding by eligible working parents claiming the Government funding and providing the self-declaration code to the school. (Eligibility for the funding is where both parents, or single parent, are/is working 16 hours or more a week.)
- **Charging** - Where a parent/both parents are known to be working, and therefore eligible, but fail to make application for the funding, then they shall be charged £50 per week until such time as their application is accepted and the funding is received.

### **Additional Charges**

#### **Private fees**

- Any report or data that is requested on a child for the purpose of a third-party private assessment requested by a parent (e.g. Mid-year pupil progress report for solicitors, private psychologist reports or solicitor reports) will be charged at an agreed rate by the Head Teacher in discussion with the Chair or Vice-chair of Governors. This rate will include a cost for staff time to sort and collate the relevant information (not less than £20 per hour) as well as photocopying charges (not less than 5p per sheet) and postage.
- Passport signing - Should a request be made for the Headteacher to verify a passport application where the appropriate criteria are met, there will be a nominal charge of £10 per application.

The Governing Body may, from time to time, amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for pupils.