

South Shore Academy

Charging & Remission

Policy



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Aims

In accordance with Section 33 of the Schools Funding Agreement, the Academy Trust is required to determine the charging and remissions policies required to address Section 457 of the Education Act 1996 and for these to be approved by the Secretary of State for Education.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of activities including clubs, trips, and residential experiences can make towards a pupils' personal and social education.

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the Academy and as additional optional activities.

This policy at South Shore, will complement our ethos by ensuring all pupils are treated with dignity and kindness and adjustments are made for families to ensure they flourish

Legislation, statutory requirements and statutory 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. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements.

It's also based on guidance from the DfE on statutory policies for schools and academy trusts.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Definitions

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities

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

Roles and responsibilities

The governing committee

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

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

Headteacher

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

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.

Parents

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

Where charges cannot be made

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

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
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is 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 resit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

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

Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school

Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

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

Where charges can be made

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

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the Academy.

School Meals & Break Refreshments

School Meals and Break Refreshments are chargeable for pupils unless they are in receipt of Free School Meal status, whereby they are entitled to an allowance which will provide a meal deal. Parents/Carers can check their eligibility by visiting this link to the Blackpool Council website.

Pupils' meal accounts should stay in credit at all times; if it is the case that your child does not have enough money on their account for a meal, they will be allowed to go into debt for this meal and must ensure there are sufficient funds for the following meal.

Payments are made through the **ParentPay website** (www.parentpay.com). Please note, although credits to ParentPay are automatic, the updates can take up to 30 minutes and at lunchtime this can take longer – please ensure funds are allocated in good time

School Journeys in School Hours

The board and lodging element of residential activities deemed to take place within Academy hours for the following activities:-

- Trips and visits organised by the school

Activities outside Academy Hours

The full cost to each pupil of activities deemed to be optional extras taking place outside school hours for the following activities:-

- Visits to performances including theatre, dance, music, drama:
- Visits abroad including residential activities such as exchanges and during trips, day visits;
- Residential activities including camping/DofE;
- Visits to sporting activities such as professional football matches;
- Entrance to activities organised by the school such as quiz evenings, dances, concerts, drama productions, clubs, leisure activities.

Music Tuition

Current legislation allows pupils to be charged for instrumental music tuition where it is provided individually or in small groups (unless the tuition is part of a recognised external examination course within the school's curriculum).

Charges for music tuition:

- The cost of music tuition is set annually and covers the cost of the peripatetic music teacher
- Current charges are available from the school office or on our website
- Payment is made termly in advance via ParentPay
- Parents must give **one term's notice** if they wish to withdraw their child from music tuition

Remissions for music tuition:

- Pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium may be eligible for subsidised or free music tuition. Please contact the school office to discuss this

For full details, please refer to our Music Tuition Agreement, which is available:

- From the school office

Materials & Equipment

The cost of purchase or hire of instruments, materials, equipment or clothing (or the provision of them by parents) for the following activities:-

- Specialist clothing for sports activities (see uniform list);
- Optional protective clothing for, e.g., CDT, Food Technology, (aprons).
- Specialist materials required by pupils e.g. Art (Art Pack), technology (wood or other materials)

The Governing Body may charge for materials or require them to be provided if parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own any finished product produced in the Academy.

Examination Fees

- Where a pupil has not been prepared for a public examination by the school or where the Academy has provided no further preparation for a re-sit, the Governing Body may make a charge for the cost of entering the pupil for the examination if previously agreed by the parents.
- If a pupil fails without good reason to complete the examination requirements for a public examination for which the Academy has paid (or is liable to pay), an entry fee then the Governing Body may recover the fee from the parent.
- Instrumental graded examinations are to be paid by parents.

General

- The cost of repairing damage and replacing equipment (lost, defaced or damaged) remains the responsibility of the parents when this damage or loss is the result of their child's behaviour or negligence.
- The Governing Body may from time to time amend the categories of activity which a charge may be made.
- Nothing in this policy precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for pupils.

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
- 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)
- 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.

Residential visits

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

Refunds and surplus money

If a trip is cancelled:

- If a trip is cancelled due to circumstances beyond the school's control (e.g., extreme weather, venue closure), the school will refund any money paid, minus any non-refundable costs already incurred (e.g., coach deposits, venue deposits)
- If a trip is cancelled due to insufficient numbers, all money paid will be refunded in full

If a pupil withdraws from a trip:

- If a pupil withdraws from a trip **before the payment deadline**, a full refund will be given
- If a pupil withdraws from a trip **after the payment deadline**, a refund will only be given if the school can recover the costs from providers (e.g., coach company, venue). Any non-refundable costs will be retained by the school
- If a pupil is withdrawn from a trip due to behaviour concerns, **no refund will be given**

Surplus money:

- If there is surplus money after a trip, the school will refund amounts **over £5 per pupil** (or 10% of the total cost, whichever is lower)
- Smaller amounts of surplus money will be retained by the school and used to subsidise future trips
- Parents will be notified of any surplus money and the refund arrangements

Deposits:

- For some trips, the school may request a **non-refundable deposit** to secure places. This will be clearly stated when the trip is advertised
- Deposits will be deducted from the total cost of the trip

Sibling discounts

The school does not offer automatic discounts for siblings attending the same trip (e.g., twins, siblings in different year groups).

However, families who are experiencing financial hardship and have multiple children attending the same trip may apply for support from our **Bursary Fund** (see Section 8 – Remissions).

Some trip providers (e.g., activity centres, coach companies) may offer sibling discounts. Where this is the case, the school will pass these savings on to families.

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.

The Trust will seek voluntary contributions for any activity in order to benefit the Trust or support a Trust activity whether during or outside school hours, residential or non-residential, and including inviting parents to pay for materials or ingredients where they wish to own the finished product.

However, all requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise:

- Their **voluntary nature**
- The fact that **pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently** from those who have contributed
- Such contributions will be **genuinely voluntary**

There is no limit to the level of voluntary contributions which parents or others can make to school activities, nor is there any restriction placed on the use which can be made of such contributions, provided they are used for the purpose specified in the request for them. They could, for example, be used to subsidise pupils from low-income families, or the cost of travel for accompanying teachers.

The law says that:

- If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, **parents will be notified of this from the outset**
- **No child will be excluded from an activity** because the parents are unable to pay
- If insufficient contributions are raised, **the trip or activity may have to be cancelled**
- If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, **their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit**

Remissions

South Shore Academy is committed to ensuring that **no pupil is prevented from participating in activities due to financial hardship.**

Automatic remissions

Charges will not be made for pupils in receipt of (or registered for) Pupil Premium for:

- Board and lodging on residential visits
- Optional extras (e.g., trips, visits, activities outside school hours)
- Materials and equipment (where pupils do not wish to own the finished product)

The nationally agreed criteria for Pupil Premium eligibility are:

- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (as long as the individual is not in receipt of Working Tax Credit)
- Support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after employment finishes or after starting work less than 16 hours per week
- Universal Credit (with an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400)

To check your eligibility for Pupil Premium, please visit the Blackpool Council website or contact the school office.

Bursary Fund

In addition to automatic remissions, the school operates a **Bursary Fund** to support families experiencing financial hardship who may not be eligible for Pupil Premium.

Families can apply to the Bursary Fund for support with:

- The cost of school trips and visits
- Music tuition
- Materials and equipment
- Other chargeable activities

How to apply:

- Applications should be made in writing (or via email) to the Headteacher
- Applications will be considered on a **case-by-case basis** by the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors
- All applications will be treated in **strict confidence**
- Families will be notified of the outcome within **10 working days**

To apply, please contact:

- **Mr N Kay (Headteacher):** neil.kay@cidari.co.uk
- **School Office:** 01253 336500

Charging in kind

The cost of ingredients, materials, equipment etc. needed for practical subjects such as craft or food technology must be budgeted for and borne by the Academy. Parents who are willing to contribute in kind can however be encouraged to do so, on a voluntary basis.

The school may charge for, or require the supply of, ingredients and materials if parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product. Schools should obtain written confirmation from parents that they wish to supply or pay for materials on this basis. Pupils must not be treated differently according to whether or not materials are being provided by their parents.

Hardship and confidentiality

South Shore Academy recognises that some families may experience financial hardship that makes it difficult for them to pay for school activities.

We are committed to:

- Treating all financial matters with **sensitivity and confidentiality**
- Ensuring **no pupil is disadvantaged** or treated differently because their parents cannot pay
- Providing **discreet support** to families who need it

If you are experiencing financial difficulties, please contact:

- **Mr N Kay (Headteacher):** neil.kay@cidari.co.uk
- **Miss K Lewis (Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion & SEND):** karen.lewis@cidari.co.uk
- **School Office:** 01253 336500

All conversations will be treated in **strict confidence**.

Breakages and Vandalism

There is nothing to prevent the Academy from asking parents to pay for the cost of replacing a broken window or defaced, damaged or lost textbook where this is the result of a pupil's behaviour. In the event of non-payment, court action may be taken if it is economically viable.

In other circumstances, there may be cases of family hardship which make it difficult for pupils to take part in 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 the remission will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors.

Voluntary contributions

The Trust will seek voluntary contributions for any activity in order to benefit the Trust or support a Trust activity whether during or outside school hours, residential or non-residential and including inviting parents to pay for materials or ingredients where they wish to own the finished product.

However all requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have contributed. Such contributions will be genuinely voluntary. There is no limit to the level of voluntary contributions which parents or others can make to school activities, nor is there any restriction placed on the use which can be made of such contributions, provided they are used for the purpose specified in the request for them. They could, for example, be used to subsidise pupils from low-income families, or the cost of travel for accompanying teachers.

The Law says that:

- If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the parents will be notified of this from the outset.
- No child will be excluded from an activity because the parents are unable to pay.
- If insufficient contributions are raised the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.
- If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

Monitoring arrangements

The Headteacher monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher every year At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing committee