Charging and Remissions Policy

SOUTH EAST ESSEX ACADEMY TRUST

Approved by:	Trust Board	**Date: 24th March 2022**
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1. Aims

Our schools 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 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 449-462 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.

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 trust board

The trust 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 local governing bodies also have overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

4.2 Headteachers

The headteachers are 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/guardians

Parents/guardians are expected to notify staff or the headteachers 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
- 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 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 local governing bodies or local authority have arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

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 residential visit

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 their child to own them
- Optional extras (see below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities

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 local governing bodies have 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/guardians 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.

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

6.4 Residential visits

Where residential visits fall under the limitations for charging as described in section 5.3, 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/guardians to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents/guardians for voluntary contributions include:

School trips during school hours and part of the school curriculum

Residential trips as described in section 5.3

On-site activity day/other bespoke workshops

There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay.

If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled and parents will be informed that this is the case.

8. Activities we charge for

The schools will charge for the following activities:

Music tuition as described in section 6.3.

Residential visits that fall outside those described in section 5.3 and other school activities outside of school hours including breakfast & after school clubs. Charges made will include (where applicable) travel costs, board & lodging, materials, books & other equipment, staff costs, entrance fees, and insurance costs.

Examination remarks at the request of parents. The charge made by the examining board will be passed on to parents (this will be refundable if the school receives a refund from the examining body).

Entry to a prescribed public examination for which they have not been prepared by the school. The charge for entering will be passed on to parents/guardians and an administration fee charged as necessary.

Entry to a prescribed public examination will be charged where a pupil fails without good reason to complete the examination requirements. This will include situations where the pupil fails to complete the necessary

coursework, is absent from more than 20% of the course lessons, or fails to sit the final examinations, but excludes justifiable or unavoidable absence.

All late entry charges will be passed onto parents/guardians.

Charges for 'finished products' where the parents/guardians indicate in advance a wish to own the finished product. The charge will cover the supply of ingredients or materials for subjects such as Design Technology or Food.

Printers credits. Charges will be made at cost for copies in excess of the allocated pupil amount at the discretion of the IT manager.

Damage to school property, including school buildings, furniture or property. Parents/guardians will be charged the cost of replacing and item, such as a broken window, defaced, damaged or lost book, where this is as a result of a pupil's behaviour.

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be determined by Headteacher and reviewed in May each year. Parents/guardians will be informed of the charges for the coming year in June each year.

9. Remissions

In some circumstances the schools may not charge or reduce the charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the local governing bodies and will depend on the activity in question and will be detailed in the information sent out to parents/guardians relating to the activity.

9.1 Remissions for residential visits

Parents/guardians who 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 as described in section 6.4.

- 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 £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (this is paid for 4 weeks after an individual stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- 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)

The above details are correct as at March 2022 and may be subject to change depending on government policy.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The SEEAT Finance Manager monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by SEEAT Finance Manager every year.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the SEEAT Finance & Premises Committee.