



SAVS Charging and Remissions Policy

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Statement of Intent

South Ascot Village School is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

The school will:

- Never charge for education provided during school hours
- Inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions towards the costs of school visits
- Ensure that no child is excluded from activities due to their parents' inability or unwillingness to pay
- Be transparent about all costs and charging arrangements
- Support families experiencing financial hardship through our remissions fund

1. Legal Framework

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

- Education Act 1996 (sections 449 to 462)
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE 'Charging for school activities' (current guidance available at GOV.UK)
- DfE 'Governance handbook' (current guidance available at GOV.UK)

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- School Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Debt Recovery Policy
- School Finance Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy & Publication Scheme
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

2. Charging for Education

The school will not charge for:

- 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, syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or Religious Education
- 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
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

The school may charge for:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes their child to own them
- Optional extras (see section 3)
- Music tuition in certain circumstances (see section 6)
- The use of community facilities and other commercial activities
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information
- Extended day services such as breakfast club and after-school clubs (see section 14)

3. Optional Extras

The school may charge for the following 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, or Religious Education
- Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at the school
- Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the LA 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, e.g. breakfast club, after-school clubs and wrap-around provision

Calculating the cost of optional extras

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- Buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff (including Teaching Assistants)
- Teaching staff under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra

- Administration costs (a flat fee of up to £5 per pupil or up to 2% of the overall costs, whichever is lower)
- Insurance costs calculated per head

Important principles

The school will not:

- Charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils
- Make a profit from optional extras
- Use payments from some families to subsidise pupils whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge
- Charge for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the school will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

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 where charges will be made.

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

4. Examination Fees and Resits

The school may charge for examination fees if:

- The examination is on the set 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 set 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 entry 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 will 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.

5. Voluntary Contributions

The school may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or school activities, including educational visits during school hours and activities that are part of the national curriculum.

Important information for parents

Voluntary contributions are entirely optional. This means:

- **You do not have to pay** - there is no obligation for parents to make a contribution
- **Your child will not be treated differently** - no pupil will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay
- **Your child will still participate** - all children will have an equal opportunity to take part in the activity regardless of whether their parents contribute

When we request voluntary contributions

When asking for voluntary contributions, we will make clear from the outset:

- That the contribution is voluntary and not compulsory
- Whether we are relying solely on voluntary contributions to fund the activity
- That if insufficient contributions are received, the activity may need to be cancelled if we cannot fund it from other sources
- Our policy for allocating places on school visits (typically on a first-come, first-served basis, or by other fair criteria which will be communicated to parents)

If an activity cannot be funded

If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the school will make this clear to parents at the outset. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled.

The school will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressured into making voluntary contributions.

6. Music Tuition

Instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size - provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parents.

When we can charge

The school may charge for instrumental or vocal tuition that a parent/carer has requested for their child. This charge will not exceed the actual cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

When we cannot charge

Charging will not be made if:

- The teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum
- The teaching is provided under the first access to the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme
- The pupil is a Looked After Child

Pupils who are Looked After Children or who attract Pupil Premium funding may receive free instrumental or vocal tuition upon request.

7. Transport

The school will not charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transporting pupils to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit that takes place during school hours or is part of the national curriculum

When we can charge for transport

The school may charge for transport for trips that are 'optional extras' (activities that take place outside school hours and are not part of the national curriculum, a prescribed public examination syllabus, or Religious Education).

Please note however that transport may be factored into the voluntary contributions under section 5.

8. Education Partly During School Hours

If 50 percent or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours (including time spent travelling if the travel occurs during school hours), it will be deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made.

Whatever the start and finish times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. School hours will not include the break in the middle of the day.

If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it will be deemed to have taken place outside school hours and the school may charge for the activity; however, the school will not charge if the activity is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of Religious Education.

The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of the school. These costs will be borne by the school for eligible families (see section 10).

Any charges for extended day services will be optional.

9. Residential Visits

The school will not charge for:

- 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, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of Religious Education
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits
- Transport provided in connection with the educational visit

In these cases, we may request voluntary contributions only. Please see section 5 for information about voluntary contributions.

The school may charge for:

The school may charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.

Exemptions from board and lodging charges

Parents will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- 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 they are 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 four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

- Universal Credit - if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

Important: If parents begin receiving any of these benefits after they have paid for their child to go on a residential visit, the school will refund the money.

Calculating whether a visit takes place during school hours

If the number of school sessions covered by the visit is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days (any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day) spent on the visit, the school will not charge for board and lodging for the activity.

10. Damaged or Lost Items

The school may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents.

Parents will only be charged the replacement cost to purchase the same or equivalent item. The school will not profit from these charges.

The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship. Parents should contact the school office to discuss their circumstances.

11. Remissions

The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils can participate in school activities regardless of their financial circumstances. We have set aside a fund to enable parents in financial difficulty to send their children on visits and activities.

The school will endeavour to offer payment plans to support affordability of trips and activities.

Eligibility for assistance

Parents in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- 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 State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

- Universal Credit - if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

How to request assistance

To request assistance, parents should contact the school office:

- **Telephone:** 01344 622118
- **Email:** main@southascotvillageschool.org.uk

All requests will be treated in the strictest confidence. The school will assess requests on a case-by-case basis and will do everything possible to support families.

Information about eligibility for remissions and the application process is made readily available to parents through multiple channels. Decisions on remission requests will be communicated promptly to support timely planning.

Important information about the remissions fund

- The funding is limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met
- Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis
- If the full cost of the trip or activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or activity will be cancelled

Cost of living support

The school recognises that many families are facing financial pressures. In addition to our remissions fund, we will:

- Consider the affordability of trips and activities when planning our programme
- Where possible, provide advance notice of costs to help families budget
- Offer payment plans for more expensive activities where feasible
- Consider subsidising some trips from the school budget where possible
- Ensure that the curriculum can be delivered effectively even if some pupils cannot participate in optional activities

12. School Trip Refunds

Non-refundable deposits

Deposits requested for trips are voluntary but may become non-refundable once bookings are confirmed. Parents will be informed in writing of the refund policy at the time of the deposit request.

When we request deposits for school trips, we will make clear that:

- **Deposits are part of our request for voluntary contributions** - while we request deposits to help us plan and book activities, these are voluntary contributions
- **Your child can still attend** - no pupil will be excluded from a trip because their parents haven't paid a deposit
- **Deposits help us plan** - by requesting deposits, we can better estimate numbers and make appropriate bookings

However, once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed with external providers, deposits may become non-refundable if cancellations result in costs to the school. We will always make clear to parents at the outset whether deposits are refundable and under what circumstances.

Cancellation by the school

In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded in full.

In the event that a school trip is cancelled by a party other than the school due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g., extreme weather, venue closure), it is at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will make every effort to recover costs from providers and will refund parents wherever possible.

Cancellation by parents or pupils

In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account:

- The reason for cancellation
- Whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip by the provider
- Whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil
- How close to the trip date the cancellation is made

Where a pupil or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school will have the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits.

Last-minute cancellations

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute (e.g., due to illness), it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account:

- Whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip by the provider
- Whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil
- The circumstances of the cancellation

Postponed trips

In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it will be at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The school will consider its options, which could include:

- Carrying forward the money until the trip takes place
- Transferring the money to another trip
- Refunding parents

In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it will be at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The school will consider its options as above.

Surplus money from trips

Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £5 per pupil (or 10% of the total contribution per pupil, whichever is lower).

Where surplus money is retained by the school (i.e., below the refund threshold), it will be used to subsidise future school trips and activities.

General principles

The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally and fairly.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they will be able to do so via the School Complaints Policy and Procedures.

13. Before and After-School Clubs

The school may charge for optional activities that take place outside of school hours, including before and after-school clubs, wrap-around care, and supervised homework sessions.

What we can charge for

Charges for before and after-school clubs may cover the related costs of:

- Materials such as books, instruments or sports equipment
- Staffing and supervision of activities
- Transport (where applicable)
- Provision of buildings and accommodation
- Food and refreshments

Wraparound care

South Ascot Village Primary School offers before and after-school wraparound childcare to support families and provide enriching activities for our pupils. Charges for these clubs are set to ensure the financial sustainability of the provision while aiming to keep fees affordable and accessible to our community.

Families facing financial hardship may apply for reduced fees or remission for before/after-school clubs by contacting the school office confidentially. Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Charging

Parents and carers will be charged for attendance at before and after-school clubs in accordance with the rates published by the school. These charges are benchmarked against local provision to maintain fairness and reflect the costs of staffing, resources, facilities, and administration required to deliver high-quality childcare.

Use of Surplus

Any surplus income generated from the wraparound childcare provision will be reinvested into the school to:

- Enhance the quality and range of activities offered within the clubs
- Maintain and improve facilities and resources used for wraparound care
- Support families who may face financial hardship through subsidised places or fee reductions
- Contribute to the wider school community and support other school initiatives

Remissions

The school recognises that some families may require financial support to access wraparound care. Remissions or reductions in fees may be available for:

- Children whose parents or carers are delivering or supporting the wraparound provision
- Families in receipt of certain qualifying benefits or facing financial hardship
- Children attending free-to-access enrichment clubs or breakfast provision during times they would otherwise attend paid wraparound care

Requests for remissions should be made confidentially to the school office and will be considered on a case-by-case basis to ensure fairness and support for those in need.

Parental agreement

The school will obtain agreement from parents/carers before charging them for clubs. This is because, if an activity is optional, parents need to have a choice as to whether or not their child participates, and must agree that they're willing to meet the cost.

Retaining places

Parents/carers may wish to retain a place in a club for their child, even if the child won't be attending for a period of time (e.g., during a family holiday). The school may charge a fee for retaining places. The amount charged will be set out in the information provided to parents when they book the club.

Staff children

Staff members' children must be counted in the total number of allocated places for clubs. The school may charge staff for places for their children, or may offer places free of charge as an employment benefit. However, we will not charge other pupils' parents more to subsidise the cost of any free places for children of staff.

14. Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

The school's Freedom of Information Policy and Freedom of Information Publication Scheme set out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.

16. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing board to ensure it remains compliant with current legislation and DfE guidance.

The policy will be reviewed sooner if:

- There are changes to relevant legislation or statutory guidance
- There are significant changes to the school's approach to charging and remissions
- Issues arise in the implementation of the policy

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy by:

- Reviewing the uptake of school trips and activities
- Monitoring requests for support from the remissions fund
- Seeking feedback from parents about the clarity and fairness of charging arrangements
- Ensuring that no pupils are being excluded from activities due to financial barriers

Any amendments to this policy will be communicated to parents via the school website.