



CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Responsibility of (<i>see policy tracking sheet</i>):	Trust Board
Approved by:	Trust Board
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1. Aim

Saracens Multi-Academy Trust believes that all its pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and trips/visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents'/carers' financial means. This Charging and Remissions Policy describes how the Trust will do its best to ensure that a good range of trips/visits and activities are offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

2. General Policy

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 which set out the law on charging for school activities in England. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements. This policy complies with our funding agreement and Articles of Association.

No charges will be levied on parents/carers unless such charges comply with this policy. Where charges are made for a particular pupil activity/trip/visit, such charges will not exceed the actual cost to the school. Parents/carers will be told how the charge is derived and who might qualify for help with the cost (such as parents/carers whose children qualify for Pupil Premium).

Charges relating to trading activities are intended to make a reasonable profit for school funds.

3. Education During School Hours

- 3.1 With the exception of musical instrument tuition, education provided during school hours is free. 'Education' includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours, or the school to carry pupils between the school and an activity/trip/visit. 'School hours' are those hours when the school is actually in session, and do not include the break in the middle of the school day or before or after school activities.
- 3.2 The cost of materials needed for subjects such as Art, Design and Technology, and Catering may be charged to parents/carers, where the parents/carers have indicated they wish to retain the finished product. Where parents/carers do not wish to keep the finished product, they may be asked to contribute towards the cost on a voluntary basis.
- 3.3 Some activities that fall within school hours may not be viable without voluntary contributions by parents/carers. Such activities will only be available if contributions make the activities financially viable. These cases will be explained to parents/carers at the planning stage.

4. Nursery Fees and Early Years Provision

Nursery fees and some early years provision are subject to charges to support the provision of high-quality childcare and educational services for children in their formative years. Nursery related charges may vary based on factors including child's age, and parent/carer income and eligibility for subsidised childcare. The aim is to ensure that early years education remains accessible and affordable for all families while maintaining the standards of care and education provided. Parents/carers seeking enrolment for their children are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the

specific fee structure and payment terms provided by each school within the Trust that offers these services.

5. Musical Instrument Tuition

Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil or pupils in a group, to play a musical instrument.

6. Public Examinations

- 6.1 There will be no charge to parents/carers for entry to external public examinations, unless they wish to alter the school's recommendations. Entry fees may be claimed from parents/carers of pupils who fail to complete examination requirements.
- 6.2 Examination re-sits: Where a school judges it to be beneficial to the educational progress of pupils to re-sit examinations, the school will fund the entry fees. In cases where pupils are entered to re-sit examinations at the request of parents/carers, despite the school's view that the re-sit will not be beneficial, parents/carers will fund the entry fees.
- 6.3 A charge will be made for the cost of any re-scrutiny of examination results (initial entry or re-sit) if so requested by parents/carers.

7. Education During and Outside School Hours

Charges will be made for activities/trips/visits during and out of school hours to cover travel and admission fees, where these are not part of the national curriculum. Schools do not generally run residential trips/visits during school hours. However, if there is no alternative and residential trips/visits have to be run during school hours, charges will be made for board and lodging and a contribution will be requested towards travel costs.

Additional considerations

The Local Governing Bodies recognise their responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational trips/visits do not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- where possible the schools will publish a list of activities/trips/visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the academic year so that parents/carers can plan ahead
- establish a system for parents/carers to pay in instalments and to secure the place on the activity/trip/visit by payment of a small deposit.

Refunds

Refunds will usually only be made where the surplus on an activity/trip/visit is more than 5% of the total costs. Any other remaining balances will be transferred to school funds.

Subsidy

The schools may subsidise certain activities to a limited extent as funding allows. This is at the discretion of the Principals.

Contributions

The Local Governing Bodies may from time to time amend the categories of activities for which a charge may be made. The school may invite parents/carers to make voluntary contributions towards the costs of activities which take place during school time. In no case will the charge for each pupil exceed the actual cost. Parents/carers may be advised that the continuance of an activity/trip/visit may depend upon voluntary contributions, but once it has been decided to run such an activity/trip/visit, no qualifying child will be excluded or treated differently by reason of inability to make a voluntary contribution.

In principle the Local Governing Bodies support the seeking of sponsorship from external sources including parent/carer donations. In addition, schools offer opportunities for parents/carers to take part in fundraising activities or to contribute by giving their time.

8. Families Qualifying for Remission or Help with Charges

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the Trust Board has agreed that some activities and trips/visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to pupils in receipt of pupil premium, service premium, or who are Looked After Children, or those supported by the Discretionary Financial Support Fund. This may also include optional extras at the discretion of the Principals.

9. School Minibuses

No charge will be made for the use of a school minibus if representing the school (sporting fixtures, for example) but voluntary contributions towards the cost of fuel may be requested if a minibus is used for any other activity/trip/visit.

10. Hiring of Premises

The arrangements for lettings will comply with the Barnet directions on the community use of schools. While non-school activities will not be subsidised by the school budget, schools may wish to encourage the community use of their facilities. Rates will be negotiated by the Trust Office using an indicative scheme of lettings rates, in line with local secondary schools, as detailed in any Lettings Policy.

11. Deliberate Damage

Any person or pupil found to have caused deliberate damage to school property will be charged by invoice an appropriate contribution towards the repair or replacement. The amount will be determined by the Trust Finance Manager and either the Principals or Vice Principals.

If payment is not received, the Chief Financial and Operating Officer has the authority to prevent a pupil attending a trip/visit/activity which is not curriculum related.

12. Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluation

The Local Governing Bodies will monitor the impact of this policy by requesting financial reports on activities/trips/visits which resulted in charges being levied, any subsidies awarded (without giving

names) and the source and amount of those subsidies. It will seek to evaluate the impact of the school's extended services on those pupils most in need of additional support and will report their findings to the Trust Board, who may wish to review this policy in the light of their findings.