



Charging and Remissions Policy

Date policy last reviewed: November 2021

Signed by:

_____ Headteacher Date: _____

_____ Chair of governors Date: _____

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Statement of intent

Salisbury Primary 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.

We promise:

- *Not to charge for education provided during school hours.*
- *To 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.*

Please note that while this policy may be more or less generous than the LA's, we have ensured it meets the requirements of the law.

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*
- *The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007*
- *The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010*
- *Freedom of Information Act 2000*
- *DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'*
- *DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'*

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, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of RE.*
- *Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless 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 resits, if the pupil is being prepared for the resits at the school.*

The school may charge for:

- *Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes their child to own them.*
- *Optional extras.*
- *Music tuition (in certain circumstances).*
- *Use of community facilities and other commercial activities.*
- *Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information.*

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*
 - *Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school*
 - *Part of RE*
- *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 or out-of-school provision*

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 TAs)*
- *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*

The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils. A subsidy will not be charged for any pupils wishing to participate 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 school will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

The school will not charge for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

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 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), 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.*

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 must 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. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the school will make this clear to parents at the outset. There is no obligation for parents to make a contribution and parents will be notified regarding whether assistance is available.

No pupil will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity. 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 pressurised 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. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

Charging will not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum.

Charging will also not be made if the teaching is provided under the first access to the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.

No charge will be made in respect of pupils who are LAC.

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 for an educational visit.*

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 is 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 do 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 is 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 RE.

The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of the school. These costs will be borne by the school.

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 RE.
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits.

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

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 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.

11. Remissions

The school has set aside a fund to enable parents in financial difficulty to send their children on visits and activities. The funding is limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis, and 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.

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)*

To request assistance, parents should contact the Mrs D Steen via the school office by calling 0121 667 4066 or emailing postbox@salisbury.walsall.sch.uk .

12. School trip refunds

All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip. However, this can be subject to change depending on reasons for the cancellation (arrangements relating to the coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic) and subject to insurance terms and conditions.

In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a school trip is cancelled by a party other than the school due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents.

In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it is 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, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

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

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it is 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 and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it is 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, or refunding parents.

In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it is 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, or refunding parents.

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 £1 per pupil.

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

If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

13. School Meals

School meals are available at Salisbury Primary School and are delivered by our outside caterer (Walsall Council Catering Services). All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to a meal every day without charge under the Universal Infant Free School Meals scheme. Paid for meals for those children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 are charged at £2.30 and is payable in advance. Some children in Year 3,4,5 and 6 may be entitled to free school meals and an application form can be obtained from the school office.

Parents/carers are expected to pay on a Monday each week or may pay for a half-term in advance if more convenient. Parents/carers may pay by cash in a labelled envelope and brought to the school office. Envelopes are also provided in the main entrance area and a secure post box to submit payment. If children are absent their dinner money is credited for the following week. Children inform class teachers, during registration, whether they are packed lunch or school meal – this is then reflected on their dinner account.

When a pupil has failed to produce dinner money after 1 week worth of debt the school may allow a meal to be provided where it is felt that this is an emergency situation, e.g. money lost on the way to school, home circumstances, planned payment date etc. Details of this are recorded and a record is maintained. The parents/carers will be contacted via telephone call to discuss any issues around payment and a letter issued to notify of the debt (Appendix 1).

Where a pupil continues to require meals and are 2 weeks in debt with no arrangement for payment to be made, a letter is sent (Appendix 2) informing parents/carers that they must either clear the outstanding debt or provide a packed lunch for the child until the debt is cleared.

In the case when, after letters have been sent home, debt is still outstanding, failure to contact school continues and a packed lunch is not provided, parents/carers will be phoned and asked to come to school with the money immediately and provide a packed lunch or take the child home for lunch, failure to do so will result in our safeguarding policy being followed.

If the outstanding debt remains unpaid the Governing Body will take Debt Recovery Action to recover this. A final letter (Appendix 3) will be sent to the parents/carers informing them that the school reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to secure payment. Parents/carers must also be aware that further school meals for their children will need to pay at least a month in advance.

If failure to contact the school after all the above the school will refer to our safeguarding policy.

Sequence of events for failed payments:

- *Call home to discuss any issues with payments after 1 week debt with accompanying letter.*
- *A second reminder letter will be sent after 2 weeks.*
- *After 2 weeks a further call to provide lunch or pay is made and if this fails our safeguarding policy may then be followed.*
- *If no payment is still made a final letter advising debt recovery action may be taken.*

14. Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

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

15. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually by the governing board. The next scheduled review date for this policy is December 2022.

Dinner Arrears

Date:

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: School Meal Payments

.....**Class**.....

The outstanding balance on your account as of is £.....

I would be grateful if payment could be arranged with the school office as soon as possible.

If you would like to receive a detailed statement of account or require any further assistance with this matter, please ask at the school office.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher

Salisbury Primary School

Dinner Arrears

Date:

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: School Meal Payments

..... **Class**

The outstanding balance on your account as of is £.....

We have previously sent you a letter dated reminding you of the outstanding balance on your child's account as of that date. No payment or contact to the school office has been made.

Please can you arrange to clear the outstanding balance on the account with the school office. If you require a detailed statement of your child's account, please see the school office.

If you are having difficulties in paying this amount, please make an appointment and we can discuss this matter further. Appointments can be made through the school office.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher

Salisbury Primary School

Dinner Arrears

Date:.....

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: School Meal Payments

.....**Class**.....

The outstanding balance on your account as of is £.....

We have previously sent you two letters datedand
.....to remind you of the outstanding balance on your
child's account. No payment or contact to the school office has been made.

We regret to advise that if payment is not received by your case
will be referred to governors to start debt recovery proceedings.

We advise that you make an appointment at your earliest convenience so we can discuss this
matter further.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher

Salisbury Primary School