

# Charging & Remissions Policy



SAMUEL WARD

## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

1. Samuel Ward Academy acknowledges the right of every student to receive free school education and understands that activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time must be made available to all students regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost.
2. Samuel Ward Academy also recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, trips and residential experiences can make towards students' education and aim to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the students of the Academy and as additional optional activities.
3. This policy on charging and remissions allows the Governing Body to charge only for the defined activities. Parents will be made aware of the policy through the Academy prospectus and they can make comments on it.
4. Samuel Ward Academy reserves the right to ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards:
  - i. the cost of any activity which takes place during Academy hours;
  - ii. the cost of Academy equipment;
  - iii. Academy funds generally.
5. Parents may be advised that the continuance of an activity may depend upon voluntary contributions but once it has been decided to run such an activity, no qualifying student will be excluded on the grounds of voluntary contributions.

## 2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. It is the responsibility of the **Governing Body** to establish a policy and procedure for charging students to participate in Academy activities and to monitor the effects of the procedure.
2. It is the responsibility of **the Headteacher** to ensure that the policy is implemented consistently and using fair criteria, in particular that the Academy's equal opportunities policies are observed. The Headteacher (or Business Manager) is also responsible for ensuring that staff, parents and students know the details of the policy as appropriate.
3. It is the responsibility of all **staff** to familiarise themselves, and comply, with this policy and procedure in accordance with relevant professional standards. Some staff may be

responsible for implementing the policy as part of their overall responsibilities (e.g., the Educational Visits Coordinator, or Heads of Department).

### 3. PROCEDURES

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

#### 1. Instrumental music lessons

Samuel Ward Academy normally charges for practical instrumental lessons held during the school day. (Full details are available from the Music Department at the Academy). Charges will not be made in the following circumstances:

where a pupil is in receipt of (or registered for) free school meals the nationally agreed criteria for which is:

- Income support
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (TC602), no working Tax Credit and at an annual income that does not exceed the first threshold level (£16,385 2021-2021)
- Supported by the National Asylum Support Services (NASS)
- Where a pupil's family is in receipt of 'Invalidity Benefit; or 'Widowed Parent's Allowance
- Other exceptional cases not falling within the criteria listed above.

Current legislation allows pupils to be charged for instrumental music tuition so long as a teaching group does not exceed 4 pupils. A charge may not be levied where the tuition is provided as part of a recognised external examination course within the school's curriculum.

The decision about charges for instrumental music tuition will be revised annually and parents informed.

#### 2. Practical subjects

In practical subjects, so that students may experience a wide range of activities and develop essential basic skills, a number of items will be made either to take home and keep or to consume on the premises. Therefore, a letter will be sent to all parents at the beginning of the school year, and to parents of students admitted during the school year, asking them to make a voluntary contribution for materials and equipment used in this way. Where parents have indicated in writing that they wish to own a finished product, a charge will be made. The charge shall not exceed the cost of the materials used by the student.

#### 3. Private use of facilities

Private use of the telephone and photocopying facilities by students is not permitted. In the rare case that a private telephone call is made it is deemed to be an emergency and no charge is made.

#### 4. Visits

##### a) General matters

- i. The Academy is permitted to charge for the provision of educational services by a third party; the Academy will ensure that the monies are paid directly to the third party organisation.
- ii. If the activity is in school time, the Academy will formally grant leave of absence to the students taking part, as the activity would no longer technically be part of the Academy's official programme.
- iii. It is likely, too, that any staff taking part in the activity would also have to be granted leave of absence. The Headteacher must consider carefully the position of accompanying staff, depending on the precise nature and duration of the visit.

##### b) Visits during the school day

Parents cannot be asked for a compulsory payment for any visit that is taking place during a normal school day. Voluntary payments (including full staff costs) can be requested but if the visit proceeds, students wishing to go but whose parents are not prepared to pay, must be allowed to attend. They cannot be subsidised by other parents. This will probably mean that insufficient funds will be available and the member of staff involved will seek additional funding from the Headteacher. If this is not possible, the trip must be cancelled.

##### c) Optional extra visits out of school time

These are visits where at least half of the time for the trip is out of normal school hours. Here the parents can be asked to meet the full cost of the trip. This compulsory payment cannot include subsidising students unable to pay and staff costs. Staff costs are to be met on a voluntary basis but the visit will not proceed unless these costs are met in full.

##### d) Residential visits including study visits abroad

Where at least half of the time away from home is not normal school time or where the work undertaken is not an integral part of the examination course, the trip can be classified as optional. As an optional trip, the cost of board and lodging for the student can be passed on to parents. This cost will not exceed the actual cost of the provision and prior written confirmation from the parent is required that s/he is willing to pay the charge. The cost

of staff accommodation, insurance and transport must be obtained by voluntary payments if the trip is to go ahead.

e) Recovery of sums payable by parents

Any sums payable by parents e.g. for wasted examination fees, for optional extras to which they have agreed, or for board and lodging, are recoverable as a civil debt.

f) Breakages and fines

Parents will be charged for the cost of replacing damaged or lost equipment where appropriate.

g) Transport

Where a student makes use of transport not provided by the Academy to travel direct from home to an activity sanctioned, though not provided, by the local authority or the Academy, then parents will be expected to meet the costs of such travel.

## 4. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

1. Parents of pupils who are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having free school meals entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of charges:
  - i. Income Support;
  - ii. Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
  - iii. Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
  - iv. Child Tax Credit (not Working Tax Credit).

When arranging a chargeable activity such parents will be invited in confidence for the remission of charges in full or in part. The Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors will make authorisation for such remission.

2. The Academy is sympathetic to those parents that are unable to afford the cost of additional activities and/or extra-curricular activities, and has limited funds available to assist parents in particularly difficult financial circumstances. Approaches for such assistance may be made to a member of staff, who will then consult the Headteacher. Approaches may also be made to the Headteacher and Deputy Headteachers directly.

## 5. MONITORING AND REVIEW

1. The Deputy Headteacher (Quality of Provision) will report on the policy to the Headteacher as appropriate.
2. The Headteacher will report to the Governors' Quality of Provision Committee on any relevant aspects of the working of the policy as appropriate.
3. The Governing Body will review the policy every two years.

Academy staff were consulted on this document and it was accepted.	January 2021
It was ratified by the Governing Body on:	18 <sup>th</sup> January 2021