Sydenham School Charging and Remission Policy

Approved by: Full Governing Body	**Date:** November 2026
Last reviewed on: November 2026	
Next review due by: November 2027	

Contents

Charging & Remission 3
1. Introduction 3
2. Aims and Objectives 3
3. Definitions 3
4. Publication of Information 4
5. Roles and Responsibilities 4
5.1. The Governing Body 4
5.2. The Headteacher 4
5.3. Staff 4
5.4. Parents 4
Parents are expected to notify staff or the Headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy. 4
6. Prohibition of Charges 4
6.1. Education 4
6.2. Transport 5
6.3. Visits and Residential visits 5
7. Charges which can be made 5
7.1. Education 5
7.2. Optional Extras 6
7.3. Music Tuition 7
7.4. Residential Visits 7
8. Voluntary contributions 7
9. Other Extra-curricular Activities 7
10. Breakages and Replacements 8
11. Remissions 8
11.1 Free School Meals and Financial Assistance 8
11.2. Remissions for Residential Visits 8
11.3. Additional Considerations 9
12. Charges for Outside Providers Using the School's Site & Buildings 9
13. Monitoring arrangements 10
14. Equality Impact 10

Charging & Remission

1. Introduction

Sydenham School believes that all our students should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' financial means.

Sydenham School is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. No pupil will be disadvantaged or excluded from educational opportunities, visits, activities or enrichment experiences because of financial hardship, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, or any other protected characteristic. The school will make reasonable adjustments where required to ensure equitable access to all activities and opportunities.

This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some students taking full advantage of the opportunities.

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review. The review date for this policy is recorded at the end of the document.

This policy has been formulated in accordance with current legislation:

- Sections 449 to 462 of The Education Act 1996
- DfE Guidance on Charging for School Activities dated 13 November 2008, last updated on 15 May 2018
- Section 6.7.5 of the School Governors Handbook

2. Aims and Objectives

This policy will:

- Set out what Sydenham School will not charge for.
- What it will make a charge for or request a voluntary contribution from parents/carers.
- Clarify how charges will be determined, so parents and carers understand why requests for payment are sometimes made for some activities.

3. Definitions

- Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

4. Publication of Information

This policy will be included on the school's website. It will specify what charges are/are not to be made and for which activities voluntary contributions will be invited from parents.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1. The Governing Body

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the Headteacher.

The Governing Body also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

At Sydenham School, responsibility for approving and monitoring the charging and remissions policy has been delegated to the Finance and Resources Committee.

5.2. The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

5.3. Staff

Our 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 Senior Leadership team will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

5.4. Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the Headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

6. Prohibition of Charges

Below we set out **what the school cannot charge for**:

6.1. 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 student is being prepared for at the school.
    - Religious Education

- Tuition for students learning to play musical instruments (individual or in groups), when the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or as part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or as part of religious education, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the student has been prepared for it at the school.
- Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

6.2. Transport

- Transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport.
- Transporting registered students to other premises where the Governing Body or local authority has arranged for students to be educated.
- Transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

6.3. Visits and Residential visits

1. Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours.
2. Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of:
    a. The National Curriculum
    b. A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school.
    c. Religious Education
3. Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit.

7. Charges which can be made

Below we set out **what the school can charge for**:

7.1. Education

The Governing Body of Sydenham School has agreed that the school can charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the student's parent wishes him or her to own them.
- Optional extras (see below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Community facilities

7.2. Optional Extras

The Governing Body of Sydenham School has agreed that the school can charge for activities known as optional extras. In these cases, the school 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 student is being prepared for at the school.
    - Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school.
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the student to school or to other premises where the local authority/Governing Body has arranged for the student to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a student on a residential visit.
- Extended day services offered to students (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, 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 students will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other students who wish to take part in the activity 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 charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those students who do not wish to participate.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

7.3. Music Tuition

The Governing Body of Sydenham School has agreed that the school can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of students, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition - details of this are shared when places offered.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum
- For a student who is looked after by a local authority

7.4. Residential Visits

The Governing Body of Sydenham School has agreed that the school can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

8. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 6 of this policy, the school can ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

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

- School trips and visits
- Resources for some technical subjects where the item made is taken home.

There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no student 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.

9. Other Extra-curricular Activities

The school will charge for the following activities:

- Taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh award Scheme – details shared when places offered.
- Some after-school and sports clubs where third-party costs apply (such as external coaches taking the session) to cover the cost of the session.

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be determined by the Governing Body and reviewed in September each year. Parents will be informed of the charges for the coming year when activities are offered.

10. Breakages and Replacements

The Governing Body reserves the right to charge for breakages and replacements as a result of damages caused wilfully or negligently by students.

11. Remissions

In some circumstances the school may reduce or waive charges outlined in Sections 7 to 9 of this policy. Decisions will be made on an individual basis, taking account of financial hardship, vulnerability and the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.

The school will ensure that any application for financial assistance is handled confidentially, sensitively and without stigma.

The school may provide financial support, either partially or fully, to enable participation in educational visits, residential experiences, music tuition, enrichment activities and extracurricular opportunities where financial circumstances would otherwise prevent participation.

11.1 Free School Meals and Financial Assistance

From September 2026, pupils may be entitled to Free School Meals (FSM) under one of two categories:

Targeted FSM

Pupils from households receiving Universal Credit whose annual earned income is £7,400 or less (net of tax and excluding benefits).

These pupils also attract Pupil Premium funding and other related educational entitlements.

Expanded FSM

Pupils from households receiving Universal Credit who do not qualify for Targeted FSM.

These pupils are entitled to receive a free school meal but do not attract Pupil Premium funding.

The school will use FSM status, alongside other indicators of disadvantage, when considering applications for remissions, subsidies or financial assistance. Receipt of Expanded FSM does not automatically entitle a pupil to all forms of financial support available to Targeted FSM or Pupil Premium pupils; however, the school may exercise discretion where hardship exists.

The school reserves the right to request evidence of eligibility where appropriate.

11.2. Remissions for Residential Visits

Where legislation requires, the cost of board and lodging associated with residential visits will be remitted for eligible pupils.

The school will normally consider financial support towards residential visits for:

- Pupils eligible for Targeted Free School Meals.
- Pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium.

- Children Looked After or previously looked after.
- Pupils experiencing significant financial hardship.
- Other pupils where exceptional circumstances apply.

Support may be provided through full or partial remission of charges, subject to available funding and individual circumstances.

11.3. Additional Considerations

Sydenham is an inclusive school and as such it is our wish not to allow financial issues to prevent a student whose family is facing genuine hardship from participating in a residential or after school activity. In such cases the Headteacher and their Senior Leadership Team will discuss with the family ways of reducing the burden.

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end Sydenham School will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- where possible the school will publish a list of visits at the beginning of the term so that parents can financially plan ahead.
- the school has established a system for parents to pay in instalments.
- some activities have additional allocated places for students from lower income families. For all other Extra Curricular Activities, we allocate places on a 'first pay, first served' basis.

The Governing Body has agreed that financial support may be provided for pupils from lower-income households or where exceptional circumstances exist. Support may include a full or partial subsidy of costs and will be determined by the Headteacher or their delegated representative, taking account of factors such as Targeted FSM eligibility, Pupil Premium eligibility, wider financial hardship, safeguarding considerations and the school's commitment to equality of opportunity and inclusion.

12. Charges for Outside Providers Using the School's Site & Buildings

- After School Activities / Clubs – educational or well-being activities that are led by outside providers for our students.
- Community Use educational or well-being activities that are led by the Local Authority e.g. Lewisham music service.
- Community Use meetings etc. run by Local Authority.
- Community Use or other use by outside agencies, i.e., film production companies, event organisers, etc. - Groups that wish to hire school facilities should seek details from the School's Facilities Manager about the charges that apply.

Each letting will be charged at the rate published by the school on an annual basis. Charges will vary depending on the facilities hired, the time of day and year. A Lettings / Service Provider Contract will be issued for each Outside Provider.

More information regarding charges for outside provider can be found in our lettings policy.

13. Monitoring arrangements

The School Business Manager monitors charges and remissions for Sydenham School and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the School Business Manager on a yearly basis and submitted to the Governing Body's Finance and Resources Committee, who has been delegated by the Full Governing Body of Sydenham School to review and adopt this policy.

14. Equality Impact

The school will monitor the impact of this policy on different groups of pupils, including those with protected characteristics, disadvantaged pupils, pupils eligible for Free School Meals, pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and other vulnerable groups.

The school will seek to ensure that charging arrangements do not create barriers to participation and will take reasonable steps to promote equitable access to educational experiences and enrichment opportunities.