

Charging Policy

Signhills Academy



Approved by: Finance
Next review due by: Spring 2027

Date: Spring 2026



Charging Policy

Context

At Signhills Academy, we offer a broad and balanced curriculum supported by access to both on and off-site activities. We also offer a range of extra-curricular activities, including clubs and residential visits. This policy outlines the academy's position on charging and voluntary contributions, this policy has been written with regard to DfE guidance outlined in Charging for school activities.

Aims / Objectives

Teaching, learning, personal development and well-being should be enhanced through:

- A clear and transparent approach to charging and remission,
- Ensuring that all pupils can fully access activities offered during session times, regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to contribute to the costs, and
- Ensuring that, where appropriate, voluntary contributions are sought to support the provision of activities.

Definitions

'School hours' are those when the academy is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the school day.

'Optional extras' are:

- Education provided outside of 'school hours' that is not:
 - a) part of the National Curriculum;
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
 - c) part of religious education.
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school,
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education),
- Extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions), and
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit (not exceeding actual cost). Parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging;

This policy is intended to enhance teaching, learning, personal development and well-being. All staff and other adults working with pupils in school have a responsibility to implement this policy with regard to the Health & Safety, safeguarding and Equality policies.

- 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 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 4 weeks after no longer qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if applied for on or after 1 April 2018 - household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits)

For **non-residential activities**, if 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

For **residential visits**, if the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours, even if some activities take place late in the evening.

A '**half day**' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Procedures

The academy cannot 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 at the school, or part of religious education,
- Vocal or instrumental tuition that is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.
- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport,
- Transport that is required to take a pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education.
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated,
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school, and
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

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- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

The Academy reserves the right to charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them,
- Breakages and replacements as a result of damages caused willfully or negligently by pupils,
- Providing additional copies of reports/ records which have been previously distributed,
- Disbursements associated with providing information under the Freedom of Information Act, for example photocopying and postage,
- Optional extras including associated materials, books, instruments, or equipment.
- Vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition. No charge will be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).
- Community facilities

In calculating the cost of optional extras we may include;

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra,
- Non-teaching staff,
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra, and
- The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

The charge levied will be determined by the Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher. The charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement will therefore be sought prior to the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Voluntary Contributions

- Voluntary contributions may be invited from parents towards the cost of the activities which support the work of the academy.
- These contributions will be genuinely voluntary and no child whose parents are unable or unwilling to contribute will be treated differently from the rest.

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- Parents not wishing to make a voluntary contribution in whole or part, but wishing their child to be included, must make the fact known directly to the Headteacher.
- For academy visits and activities, where determined appropriate, voluntary contributions will usually be invited through individual letters to parents.
- If insufficient voluntary contributions are received and the trip is considered by the Headteacher to not be financially viable, then it will be cancelled and any monies received will be returned.

Remissions

Under this policy, the Headteacher has a power of discretion. This discretion may be used to waive charges, either in full or in part, for an individual pupil where, in the opinion of the Headteacher, there is clear evidence of financial hardship or an educational or social imperative for a given pupil to benefit from an activity which, but for a remission, would not make their participation possible.

Responsibilities

School

To consistently apply this policy,

To engage in the review and improvement of this policy and any associated assessment systems.