

SAF (GOPA) CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Reviewed. June 2021

Adopted by LGB June 2021

To be reviewed July 2022

We strive to provide the highest quality of provision for our students and we allocate resources appropriately and within guidelines to ensure that good value for money is achieved.

The policy covers the following areas:

Voluntary contributions	School trips and visits	Pre-school charges & activities
Materials and text books	Music tuition	Remissions
Damage and loss of property	Other charges	

Please find attached the following documents which also relate to the Policy;

- a) Appendix A – A list of Charges for Pre-School (3 and 4 years)
- b) Appendix B – A list of late fees

Basic Principles

No charge can be made for education during school hours. The definition of 'education' includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by Sharnbrook Academy Federation to carry students between the school and the activity. 'School hours' are those when the school is actually in session, and do not include the break in the middle of the day.

School trips, visits and practical activities enhance the pupils' learning and broaden their knowledge and experience. These are undertaken with the voluntary contributions of parents. No pupil will be excluded from an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a voluntary contribution. The opportunity to pay in instalments will be offered to parents who wish to pay in this way. At the end of an activity all unused funds in excess of £5 per paying pupil will be returned to parents.

Should a student be removed from an activity/trip due to poor behaviour at least 72 hours before the activity/trip commences then a refund will be given minus any expense that the school cannot recover from other sources. If a student is removed from an activity/trip less than 72 hours before it commences then SAF will not refund payments made.

Voluntary Contributions

There is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours. Parents may be invited to make voluntary contributions to extend the value of school funds.

If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, this will be explained at the planning stage. If a planned activity has to be cancelled, any monies received will be returned. Contributions will not exceed the actual cost.

Residential trips – Essential:

For residential trips that are essential to the program of study a charge will be levied for board and lodging, not to exceed the costs, travel, entrance and activity fees, insurance costs and specialist tuition.

Residential trips: Non-essential:

- If the amount of school time on the trip is less than half of the total time of the trip, a charge will be levied up to the full cost of the trip:
- If the amount of school time on the trip is more or half of the total time of the trip, a charge will be levied for board and lodging

(Note: to extend school funds, parents may be asked for voluntary contributions at the planning stage)

Early Years Funding

- All 3- & 4-year olds receive 15 hours free education per week. (Funding is received the term after the child has turned 3 years). 3- & 4-year olds of working parents may be entitled to 30 hours per week free funding.
- Children in the Reception year access a full-time place and receive full government funding.
- We do not charge for any activity that is undertaken as part of the EYFS.

The school is funded by the Local Authority, no fees are charged for the 15 hours free education. We do however, ask all parents to give a voluntary contribution of £5.00 per month to our school fund, which helps towards buying food for the children's snack and also enables us to provide any extra items for cooking, gardening, sewing or mending of equipment, minibus trips and the buying in of external agencies, i.e. entertainers, workshops etc.

We also have "GOPA PTA" which is a fundraising organisation that holds events to raise money for the school throughout the year. Parents can choose whether to contribute to the fundraising efforts. Our fundraising directly helps to purchase valuable learning resources for the children.

Pre-School Day

(See appendix A for current charges)

These are facilities that provide care for children and which operate during one or more of the following periods.

- *Morning 8.30am to 11.30am*
- *The lunch time 11.30am to 12.20pm*
- *Afternoon 12.20pm to 3.20pm*

Any 'in house' SAF Breakfast Club or After School Club

SAF will charge parents for these services, and the Trustees on an annual basis will approve the scale of charges.

Pre- School Lunch

Children who attend a lunch will be required to pay for a hot meal (unless they are entitled to a free school meal or have a packed lunch). **The current charge for a hot meal is £2.35**

Additional Sessions

At the beginning of term sessions are allocated based on request made by parents' subject to availability. However, it may be possible to access additional sessions at the Pre-School.

Bookings are made through the school office and once a place is confirmed it is yours until you give notice to leave.

Cancelling or amending bookings

In all circumstances we require a minimum of 4 weeks' notice to permanently cancel or amend a booking. This is to enable us to offer the place to another family and to ensure that staffing ratios are correct.

If a child is absent for any reason (illness, holiday) we are unable to refund fees for any missed sessions and you will be invoiced for sessions where funding has ceased due to the absence.

If we have notice of a child's absence before 9.30am and have not ordered a hot meal, then the cost of a meal will be credited to the child's Parentpay account.

Emergency/one off chargeable bookings

These will be taken subject to availability and the cost of the additional session will be added to the next month's invoice. If an emergency booking is made on two or more occasions on consecutive weeks it will be deemed a regular booking and will be invoiced and charged accordingly.

Invoices

An invoice will be issued monthly. Parents will only be charged for any hours booked above the free funded hours (if eligible). Payment must be made by the date specified on the invoice. Payment is accepted by BACS or childcare vouchers or tax-free childcare account. Any invoice queries should be directed to the School Office.

Invoice reminders will be sent out if payment is not received within the allocated time (14 days). Parents may be charged an Administration fee of £10 if payment is received late.

Payment Problems

If parents have any queries regarding the charges or problems making payments then they must contact the School Office immediately to discuss the issue. The enquiry will be dealt with in confidence and we will try to be as flexible as possible. Parents will be asked to agree to a schedule of payments. We will pursue outstanding fees as per our Debtors Policy. **We reserve the right to reduce a child's sessions down to just the funded number of hours until the outstanding debt is repaid.** Unfortunately, if payment schedules are not met or fees are not paid before leaving the federation we may have to refer the case to our designated legal advisors. Please see our Debtors Policy for more details.

Children with additional Needs

All children are eligible for their 15 hours government funded sessions. Where a child has additional needs and request additional hours, they may incur extra charges (over and above the stated fees rate). This would be looked at on a case by case basis by the Trustees.

Security/Collection of children

In all cases only parents/carers who have been nominated on the registration form will be allowed to collect children from nursery school.

Parents must inform staff if an unknown person will be collecting their child. We operate a password system in the Pre-School which the parent should use when making the initial call. The person collecting should have some form of ID with them.

Staff will not let any child go with an adult that is unfamiliar to them until their identity has been fully established. In some cases, this may necessitate a phone call to the parent or carer to double check.

Late pick up

Parents must inform the Pre-School as soon as possible if the parent or nominated person is unavoidably delayed.

On the first instance of lateness a warning will be issued. All instances of lateness will be recorded in a late book which the parent must sign at the time of collection.

The Pre-School operate a late collection charge- see appendix B.

These charges will be added to your next invoice.

For any child that is not collected within 1 hour of end of the session and where no contact has been made by the parent/carers, we will be required to inform the Duty Social worker and the child will be handed over to their care.

Pre-School Other Charges

The Principal or Trustees may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services e.g. for providing a full copy of an OFSTED report, personal phone calls or personal photocopying and copies of photos taken in school.

Damage/loss to property

A charge will be levied in respect of willful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including but not restricted to, premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) the charge will be the cost of replacement or repair. The Principal/SAF Finance Committee may agree a lower cost after considering the circumstances.

Lettings

All lettings are conducted through SAF MAT Trading Ltd a wholly owned subsidiary of SAF. A charge will be levied for the use of school property to at least the cost of providing and maintaining those facilities. Please refer to separate Lettings policy. Charges will be approved annually by the Trustees.

Remissions

The CFO may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity if it is felt reasonable in the circumstances.

Complete remission of any charges for board and lodging for a residential trip will be made if:

- a) The education provided on that trip cannot be charged for: and
- b) Parents on one of the benefits (below) may receive a full remission on the board and lodgings element of the trip and if the trip is **solely** in school hours, then travel is not charged either.

- i. LAC pupils where the responsible person has committed funds to the trip (e.g. Local Authority/Social Services/other agencies) – the relevant agency will need to pay the school, in full, for the trip;
- ii. The students' parents/carers are in receipt of Income Support, Child Tax Credit (provided that they are not entitled to working tax credit and have an annual income, assessed by HRMC, that this does not exceed £16,190). The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit and Income related employment and job seekers allowance or income-based jobseekers allowance; the proscribed element of Universal Credit; part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Parents can request an Awards letter from whoever pays their benefits which will confirm the earnings and how much benefit is being received – if they are under the £16,190, then they will be entitled to the remission for board, lodgings and transport (if applicable). We would need to see this letter or alternative evidence of annual income, before confirming the total remission to be applied to the trip*.

*Since the introduction of Universal Credit, DWP do not issue Awards letters as the amount they can receive can change monthly and therefore after receiving any evidence relating to the receipt of Universal credit, all associated queries regarding this should be made to the CFO for advice.

If children are in receipt of Pupil Premium funding the school may decide to pay for the board, lodgings and transport element of the trip from the Pupil Premium fund. This decision is based on the level of educational support they currently receive and whether the school feels the child would benefit from attending a residential trip. Information gathered by the school will inform the final decision.

Appendix A

Sessions	3 and over
Mornings 8.30am – 11.30am	£15.00
Lunch time 11.30am – 12.20pm (School meals are charged at £2.35 a day)	£5.00
Afternoons 12.20pm – 3.20pm	£15.00
Total Charge from 8.30am - 3.20pm	£35.00

There are no discounts available on the fees.

All amounts shown are per child, per day. The above fees are only charged on hours above the funded weekly hours that a child may be entitled to.

Appendix B

Late Fees	3 and over
Every 15 minutes after time due to pick up. <i>Morning session late fee applied after 11.45am</i> <i>Lunch late fee applied after 12.35pm</i> <i>Afternoon session late fee applied after 3.35pm</i>	£5.50
Every 15 minutes after 11.45am, 12.35pm and 4.05pm	£10.00