

Trust Policy

Charging and Remissions

Policy type	Trust wide
Review	Every 3 years
Author/Responsible Officer	Deputy CEO Operations
Board to be ratified	Finance and Operations Committee
Approved by	Robin Humber
Date of ratification	20 th February 2024
Date of next review	February 2027

This policy is a mandatory policy for all DSAMAT Academies and must be implemented without any amendments

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Our mission, vision and values

The Trust has a clear **mission** at its core, ensuring that all pupils are enabled to flourish, rooted in God's Love - academically, socially, spiritually, physically and mentally. This is central to our work, and rooted in our Christian foundation (John 10 v 10). Our commitment to mutual flourishing within the school community is built upon our shared belief in Church of England principles. In our Trust, just as in the wider Church of England community, 'flourish' refers to prospering, thriving and growing – not shrinking out and dying. It means prayerfully encouraging all within our schools so that they might prove fruitful, successful and contented in the longer term. We seek to provide space generously for all to flourish in life and all of its structures. Equal treatment for all pupils, staff and the wider community is a core part of enabling this long term, holistic flourishing.

We have a clear **vision** about creating successful schools for the benefit of their communities. We expect any school in the Trust to continuously improve, and those graded by OFSTED as RI/Serious Weaknesses/Special Measures to make rapid progress and be able to secure an OFSTED grading of at least "Good" within 3 years post-conversion. All schools provide rich and diverse curricula which evolve to meet the needs of their children and local communities, as well as delivering educational excellence to enable them to continue to flourish in later life.

The way we work and deliver against our mission is critical to our Trust. We have shared, agreed **values** of:

Hope; Nurture; Equality; Respect; Collaboration

The Trust's vision is underpinned by a Christian values framework which is adopted by all schools. It provides clear expectations for all Trust employees on how we wish our values to impact on all areas of school life. It draws on, and is informed by, the National Church of England Vision for Education and the Diocesan Board of Education Vision.

Each school within the Trust has a personalised vision for education, developed locally to reflect the individual character and needs of the school community. This vision is underpinned by the Trust's wider vision, and agreed with the Trust, but it is owned and driven by the headteacher and their LGB.

Our community

The Trust are dedicated to delivering education that serves local communities. Our schools are inclusive, welcoming those from all and no faiths, from all abilities and backgrounds. We believe in providing a high-quality education, underpinned by Christian values, which enables every child to flourish.

Underpinning all of the Trust's work is a belief in educational excellence. The Trust serves all stakeholders by providing schools with the highest levels of academic rigor and pastoral care.

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Our schools are places where children and young people develop and thrive intellectually, socially, culturally and spiritually. All of the Trust's schools teach a broad and balanced curriculum within national guidelines focusing on core skills. This is designed to ensure that all pupils reach their academic potential and seek to enrich their experience along the way. Pupils will be enabled to succeed in an atmosphere of high expectation, aspiring to educational excellence with a firm foundation of values.

This policy forms part of our Trust governance and ensures that we are held to the highest standards as we carry out our duties.

Statement of Intent

This is the Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust (DSAMAT) over-arching Charging and Remissions policy and must be implemented and adhered to in each of the academies within the Diocese of St Albans Multi Academy Trust along with those working within the central team.

This policy will also be implemented and adhered to from the first day of any other academy joining the Trust.

For the remainder of this document, the Diocese of St Albans Multi Academy Trust will be referred to as DSAMAT.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Trust believes that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits independent of their parents' financial means and recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including trips, clubs and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education.

Our schools aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the Academy and as additional optional activities. In order to deliver this, children will undertake curriculum linked visits to places of interest outside of the school and third parties will come into school for specific activities linked to the children's learning. Additional after school clubs and activities will be organised by the school and third party organisations.

- 1.2.1 This is a Trust wide Charging and Remissions Policy and describes how each of our schools will do their 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 pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

2. Charging for Education

- 2.1 No charges will be made for:

- Admission applications
- education provided from Reception class upwards during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours
- adults who accompany children and teachers on a school trip (or help with activities in school where parents have been asked to contribute) as they will have provided a benefit in kind to the school by giving their time freely
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip
- 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 religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, unless provided at the request of the pupil's parents

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We may charge parents for the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where they desire their child to own them
- Optional extras
- Music and vocational tuition (in certain circumstances)
- Use of community facilities

3. Optional Extras

3.1 We may charge parents 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
 - Religious education
- Examination entry fees where the pupil has not been prepared for the examinations at the school
- Transport, other than that arranged by the LA for the pupil to be provided with education
- Transport, other than required to deliver the national curriculum
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils
- For Food Technology, where only a small amount of an ingredient is required, pupils will be able to purchase this from school to avoid parents having to purchase something they may not use again at home

When calculating the cost of optional extras, the school will only take into account the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- The employment of non-teaching staff
- The cost of teaching staff (including teaching assistants) 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

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The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils. We will not charge a subsidy for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. If a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, we will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

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 pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra.

4. Voluntary Contributions

- 4.1 Where our schools cannot levy charges, and it is not possible to make these additional activities within the resources ordinarily available to the school, the school will request or invite parents to make a contribution towards their cost.

The contribution is entirely voluntary and the amount received from parents will not affect the child's right to attend an activity. No individual child will ever be deprived of the right to join their peers on a trip because of their parent's inability or unwillingness to pay.

We will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions. However, where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible and there is no way of making up the shortfall, we will notify you of this reason and the outcome of the activity being cancelled.

5. Music Tuition

- 5.1 Music tuition is the only 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.

6. Transport

- 6.1 We 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 body or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated

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7. Residential Visits

7.1 We 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 religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits
- We may charge for board, lodging and extra-curricular activities – but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.

7.2 We will do our utmost to ensure that parents who are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits are offered either a significantly reduced charge or no charge for their child to attend a residential trip:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) did not exceed £16,190 in the previous financial year
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance
- 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)

8. Education partly during school hours

- 8.1 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. 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 we may charge for the activity; however, we 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 religious education.
- 8.2 Residential visits: 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, we will not charge for the

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activity. The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of the school.

9. Damage or Lost Items

- 9.1 The school may charge parents for the cost of replacing items broken, damaged or lost due to their child's behaviour. Parents will not be taken to court for failure to pay such costs.

10. Remissions

- 10.1 Our schools may agree to remit in full or in part the cost of activities for particular groups of parents, for example, in the case of family hardship. We will do our utmost to support with family hardship, however, please note that there is no guarantee that all requests can be met.

When arranging a chargeable activity, parents will be invited to apply to the Headteacher in confidence for the remission of charges, either in full or in part. Financial assistance will be allocated on a needs basis, and if the full cost of the activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the activity will be cancelled.

11. Additional Considerations

11.1 We recognise our responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead
- we have established a system for parents to pay in instalments
- when an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- we acknowledge that offering opportunities on a "first pay, first served" basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection. When any trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places.
- We may also charge for Freedom of Information papers when sought

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12. Monitoring and Evaluating

- 12.1 The Trust, along with each of our schools, will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving at each finance meeting a report on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, the subsidies awarded (without giving names) and the extent to which the school subsidised the activity. It will seek to evaluate the impact of the school's extended services on those children most in need of additional support.

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