

St George's Catholic Primary School



Charging and Remissions Policy

Policy and Practice

Introduced Date: February 2021

Review Date: January 2024

**Approved by the Governing Body of St George's
Catholic School**

Chair of Governors: Helen Mac Connell

Date: 09.02.21

INTRODUCTION.

The Head Teacher and Governing Body recognise the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend pupils' learning and to contribute to their personal development. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to promote and provide such experiences for the pupils of the school, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities.

However, many of these activities have an associated cost and cannot be provided unless voluntary contributions are received or parents are charged for the cost.

This policy will set out the circumstances in which charges will or will not be made for school activities and when how we try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES

The policy compliments the school's equality policy, curriculum policy, finance policy, educational trips policy and teaching and learning policy.

STATEMENT:

The policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1996

Where 'parent' is referred to this will include adults with a responsibility for the pupil.

We aim:-

- To make school activities accessible to all pupils regardless of family income
- To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum
- To provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school
- To respond to the wide variations in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.

Legislation

1. EDUCATIONAL DURING SCHOOL HOURS

The DfE in its guidance to School Governors states that “education provided during school hours must be free. The definition of “education” includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by school to carry pupils between the school and an activity.” It goes on to advise that “although schools cannot charge for school time activities, they still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind)”

When additional costs are incurred by St George’s Catholic School to enhance the curriculum opportunities for the pupils, parents may be requested to make voluntary contributions. However, no pupil will be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.

No charges will be made for:

- 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of the school’s basic curriculum for religious education.
- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments (or singing) if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum.
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours. However, Governors have agreed that Voluntary Contributions may be requested.
- Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum or part of the school’s basic curriculum for religious education.
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip. However, Governors have agreed that Voluntary Contributions may be requested.

2. EDUCATIONAL OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS

The DfE in its guidance to School Governors states that “Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or religious education. No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination. Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The Education Reform Act 1988 described activities, which can be charged for as “optional extras”.

Charges may be made for:

- Activities outside school hours – Non-residential activities (other than those listed in 1 above), which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours).
- Residential activities – Board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. However, pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see point 3 below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs. Residential trips deemed to take place outside school time (other than for those activities listed in 1 above).
- Music tuition – for individuals or groups of any appropriate size. Charges may be made to parents for individual tuition in playing any musical instrument, even if such tuition takes place during school hours. Parental agreement and a signed contract will be obtained before the tuition is provided.
- Damage to school property - the cost of replacing any item, such as a broken window or defaced, damaged or lost book, where this is a result of a pupil’s behaviour.
- Visits to school by professionals e.g. authors, storytellers, musicians, dancers, artists etc.
- Weekly swimming lessons

3. REMISSIONS

To ensure that access to activities reflects intentions, St George's Catholic School will implement the following Remissions Policy.

The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils gain fully from everything that the school is able to offer them and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. This policy takes into account the very real and persistent difficulties which people on low income have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their children.

Where parents are in receipt of:

- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Guaranteed State Pension
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, providing that working tax credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HMRC) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules.

their child is entitled to claim Free-School Meals. For all children who are registered, whether they take up the free school meal or not, the school will receive extra funding known as Pupil Premium. This Pupil Premium can be used to offset many additional charges or expenses such as contributions towards school trips or attendance at extra-curricular activities.

Additional categories of parents may claim help with some costs in some circumstances, which will be decided by the Governing Body taking into account as to whether additional help is justified.

The Governing Body will observe its statutory requirement to remit in full the cost of board and lodgings for any residential activity that the school organised for the pupil if the activity is deemed to take place within school hours.

There may be cases of family hardship which make it difficult for pupils to take part in other particular activities for which a charge is made. When arranging a chargeable activity the Governing Body will invite parents to apply in confidence for the remission of charges in part or in full. Authorisation of remission will be made by the Head Teacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors.

4. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

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 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.

5. CONTRIBUTIONS

Voluntary contributions may be requested to help with providing activities even though they may be part of the normal school day or part of the National Curriculum.

If voluntary contributions are requested for an activity, it should be clearly understood that there is no obligation to contribute and that if the parent is unable or unwilling to pay, the child will not be excluded from the activity.

If sufficient contributions are not received the activity may be cancelled.

School Fund: This is a voluntary contribution of £10 per family every term (£30 per year).

6. DATA PROTECTION OF PUPILS AND FAMILIES.

Teachers will ensure that these children are not publicly identified and stigmatised. This is particularly important as the fear of stigmatisation is often a key element in the non-take up of Free School Meals. This will be accomplished by developing methods of collecting voluntary charges or dinner money, which do not identify children who do not contribute. Termly contributions towards School Fund will be requested at the start of every term through the school newsletter.

Signed: _____