



St Catherine Catholic Primary School and Nursery

Charging and Remissions Policy

Date Ratified by Governors: April 2023

Signed

Name:

Due for Review:

For further information on charging see the DES Circular 2/89 Education Reform Act 1988: Charges for School Activities.

Statement of Intent

St Catherine School is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

We promise:

- Not to charge for education provided during school hours.
- To inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions.

Legal framework

This policy will have consideration for, and be compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2019) 'Governance handbook'
- Freedom of Information Act 2000

Charging for education

We will not charge parents 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 by the school, or part of religious education.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, unless provided at the request of the pupil's parents.

We may charge parents for the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where they desire their child to own them
- Optional extras (see below)
- Music and vocational tuition from outside providers
- Use of community facilities
- Certain early years provision
- The use of community facilities and other commercial activities
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information

The school will make it clear that, in the following circumstances, it will propose to remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would otherwise be payable to the school: where a family is in receipt of free school meals or can provide evidence of financial hardship.

Education partly during school hours

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.

Whatever the start and finish times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

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 the school may charge for the activity; however, the school 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 RE.

The remission of charges for board and lodging payments is the responsibility of the school. These costs will be borne by the school.

Any charges for extended day services will be optional.

Optional extras

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.
- Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the LA has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils

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 where the tuition is an optional extra

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.

The headteacher will charge parents for the Year 6 Residential trip. However, to help parents budget for the trip the school will offer parents the opportunity to spread payments over a set period.

Voluntary contributions

We may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, we will make this clear to parents at the outset. We will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents to make a contribution, and notify parents whether assistance is available.

No child will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled.

We will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressured into making voluntary contributions.

Guidance on Voluntary Contributions – Day Visits

Each year group will have a minimum of one educational visit a year and a maximum of two educational visits a year that request voluntary contributions from parents.

Trip leaders must provide the head teacher with information about the cost of an educational visit before approval can be given.

In deciding on the costs the following must be taken into account:

- Health and safety – reference should be made to the school's Educational Visits Health and Safety Policy eg. Pupil/adult ratio outlined in health and safety policy may have implications for the cost of the trip.
- Cost of transport.
- Cost of entrance fees.
- Cost of entrance fees for staff and additional adult helpers.

The finance officer will cost trips for teachers eg. enquire about cost of coaches etc....and keep account of the pupils who have paid. The finance officer will let teachers know if a reminder is needed about voluntary payment.

The school budget has a set amount to support the cost of educational trips when parents are unable or unwilling to pay. However the head teacher may decide that the trip is no longer viable if too many parents are unwilling or unable to pay for a particular trip.

The maximum voluntary contribution towards educational visits or activities within the school will be no more than £30 during one school year.

All parents who are in receipt of free school meals will be asked only to pay £15 a year towards the cost of day visits, the remainder is to be funded by the Pupil Premium budget, as long as the budget allows.

Refunds will not be available on voluntary contributions for school trips if the school is unable to reclaim the money from outside providers.

Year 6 Residential Trip (Summer term)

For insurance purposes the governing body needs to approve all residential trips.

At the final governing body meeting of each school year a report of the proposed Year 6 trip will be presented to the GB. The Year 6 teacher will prepare this report although the teacher need not necessarily be present at the meeting. The report must be discussed with the head teacher before presentation to the GB.

The report must include a *brief* comment on the following:

- Location of the trip
- Strategies for ensuring the health and safety of the pupils during the trip.
- The value and opportunities the trip offers eg. activities offered
- Staff/pupil ratio and cost to school or parent.
- Cover in school for additional staff who may need to accompany the Year 6 children.
- Number of children in year group whose parents may not be able to afford either part of the cost or the full cost.
- Cost of the trip – under different headings eg. cost of transport, additional salary costs.....

The GB approval of a trip will be minuted in accordance with insurance purposes.

The GB does not wish any pupil to miss the opportunity of a residential trip because of extreme financial difficulties and parents/carers may seek help in meeting part or all of the costs by speaking in confidence to the head teacher.

We may charge for board and lodging.

Parents will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- 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 State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are 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 four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net income of no more than £7,400 as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods).

In all cases parents will be asked to pay a minimum of 40% towards the cost of the residential trip.

Music tuition

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.

Charging will not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum

Charging will also not be made if the teaching is provided under the first access to the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme

No charge will be made in respect of pupils who are LAC.

Damaged or lost items

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.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing board, or a committee of the governing board.