

St Francis Catholic Primary School



Charging and Remissions Policy

Jesus said 'Love one another as I have loved you'

St Francis School is a loving community, respecting every child and adult and caring for God's World, as we help each other to do our best and grow together in Christ.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment.

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

It is the policy of the school to enrich the children's learning through a variety of educational visits, and visitors who share their expertise and practical, first-hand activities. Children learn best when they are able to experience something for themselves and they often remember these occasions long afterwards!

In order to facilitate these activities, it has been standard practice for parents to be asked to contribute towards any extra expense incurred. Without parental contributions, many of the valuable visits and activities would have to cease. The regulations on charging, as stated in the Education Reform Act 1996, provide guidelines as to when and how schools may charge for school-based activities.

The purposes of these provisions are:

- to maintain the right to a free school education.
- to ensure that activities offered as part of the National Curriculum and wholly within normal school time should be available to all pupils, regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost.
- to give educational authorities and schools the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours.
- to confirm that schools may invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or in support of any activity organised by the school, either in or outside school hours.

This policy clarifies how we currently implement these.

Calculating charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents

There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't or won't. In all matters relating to the levying of a charge or asking for a voluntary contribution, the Headteacher (on behalf of the Governing Body) will

sympathetically consider the position of any child where the family is either receiving Income Support or suffering genuine financial hardship. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions, fundraising and School Fund. Pupils entitled to Pupil Premium may have some or all of the costs met by this funding stream.

Specific Activities During School Hours

Music tuition

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum, which is not charged for. There is a charge for individual music tuition if this is not part of the National Curriculum e.g. piano lessons provided by a peripatetic teacher. Parents are charged directly and provided with information about music tuition at the start of each academic year.

Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for children in KS2. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum.

As we have no pool of our own, we hire the pool at Blackwater Leisure Centre. To meet the additional costs of hiring the pool, tuition and travel, parental contributions are required. If a parent is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution towards costs, we still allow the child to participate fully in the lessons.

We inform parents when these lessons are to take place, and we ask parents for their written permission for their child to take part in swimming lessons off site.

Non-Residential Visits and Visiting Experts

When organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, parents will be informed of the nature of the activity and will be invited to make a voluntary contribution towards its cost. This must be a reasonable length of time before the event allowing for it to be cancelled if insufficient voluntary contributions are received.

If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity; no child will be excluded on the basis of inability to pay.

Occasionally there are opportunities for children to experience live performances from theatre groups, story tellers or musicians. Sometimes the fees are paid wholly or in part by the Parent's Association, sometimes from the school budget or school fund. However, on occasions, parental contributions are needed if such activities are to go ahead.

The following is a list of additional activities organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. This list is not exhaustive:

- Visits to museums;
- Sporting activities which require transport expenses;
- Outdoor adventure activities;
- Visits to the theatre;
- School trips
- Musical events
- Workshops provided by outside agencies e.g. touring theatre groups, Medieval Day etc

Residential visits

The educational and social benefits of such visits are highly valued by the school. The procedures will be as follows:

1. Parents are invited to a meeting to discuss the plans, including the provisional cost, and will be asked whether they would like the visit to proceed.
2. A deposit to indicate positive commitment will be requested. If there are sufficient children wanting to go, the booking will be confirmed. In the event of there not being sufficient children to make the visit viable, the booking will be cancelled.

3. Parents will be told how to make payments, either in instalments or in full. In cases of particular hardship we will discuss, in confidence, ways in which we may be able to support the family concerned.

In order that residential visits can continue, the cost to the parent will include board and lodging (for which a full charge can be levied), as well as travel, adult supervision, insurance and other incidental expenses which, according to the Act, need to be met by a voluntary contribution. A breakdown of costs per child should be available for parents on request. Should any parents wish their child to participate, but are unable to pay the necessary contribution, the Finance committee of the Governing Body will decide whether the visit is to proceed or not. Pupils entitled to Pupil Premium may have some or all of the costs met by this funding stream.

Pupils whose parents are in receipt of the following support benefits are entitled to the remission of board and lodging charges:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers 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 you're 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 you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

Any residential visit organised out of school hours, will be financed on the basis of charging the full cost of the visit, covering travel, board and lodging, adult supervision, insurance and all other incidental costs. Only those prepared to accept the full cost will be entitled to participate.

Consumable Materials

If it becomes necessary to recoup expenses for such activities such as cooking, design technology or craft work, parents will be informed that a charge will be

levied if they wish to own the end product. No child will be excluded from such activities through non-payment.

School Clubs

No charge for adult time will be levied for out of school clubs, organised and run by teaching staff. If the activity involves specialist equipment or resources, a cost to the parents may be required. Where visiting experts or sports coaches run clubs on school premises, a fee may be charged.

Malicious Damage

Where it can be proved that a child or group of children have caused damage to school property or resources, the school reserves the right to seek to recover costs from the parents in order to replace or repair the damaged property.

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| Signed:(Chair of Finance Committee) | Name: Mr M. Catchpole | Date: February 2017 |
| Signed: (Head) | Name: Mrs S. Ginzler-Maher | Date: February 2017 |
| Next Review: Spring Term 2018 | | |