



St Mary's and St Peter's C of E School

Charging & Remissions Policy

We believe high standards of care and love are an integral part in the quality of teaching and learning across the whole curriculum. Our school Christian vision of 'Life in all its fullness' applies to all areas of our school. The two great commandments given by Jesus will underwrite the life of our school; they are to 'love God' and to 'love your neighbour as yourself'. It is our aim for both of these instructions to be evident in the whole life of the school, in the relationships between all members of the community; pupils, staff and parents.

St Mary's and St. Peter's school fully recognises its moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils and staff. Our Charging & Remissions Policy is one of a range of documents which set out the safeguarding responsibilities of the school. We wish to create a safe, welcoming and vigilant environment for children and staff where they feel valued and are respected.

Introduction

The Head Teacher and Governing Body recognises the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend pupils' learning and to contribute to their personal development. The Head Teacher and Governing Body aims 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.

The policy will set out the circumstances in which charges will or will not be made for school activities and when charges may be waived in order to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit from school visits, curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Statement

The policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1966.

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 – 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 Mary’s & St Peter’s Primary 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.

Education Outside of 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”.

Remissions

To ensure that access to activities reflects intentions, St Mary’s & St Peter’s Primary 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 Jobseekers Allowance, Support under part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 or Child Tax Credit (provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received), 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.

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.

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.

Charges:

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge for the activities and items detailed below:

- Trips which are not part of the school curriculum or are outside the school day (i.e. Weekend residential).
- After school and pre-school clubs.
- Music tuition if it is not required for the National Curriculum and is provided for an individual pupil or for groups of pupils.
- Damage to school property – the cost of replacing any items, such as a broken window or defaced, damaged or lost book, where this is a result of a pupil's behaviour.
- Damage to books (Reading scheme).
- School meals unless entitled to free school meals.

Individual Music Tuition

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.

Ingredients or Materials for Practical Subjects

Parents are encouraged to provide ingredients, materials etc. needed for practical subjects such as Technology. The Governing Body may charge for, at cost or less, or require the supply of, ingredients and materials if parents have indicated, in advance, their wish to own the finished product.

Lost School Equipment, Books etc.

Parents will be expected to replace or pay for the cost of lost items of school property.

Residential Activity

The DfE in its guidance to School Governors states that "For a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or essential to the education provided at the school, no charge may be made for either the education or the costs of the travel. **However, parents will be asked for a voluntary contribution to cover these extra costs. If sufficient contributions are not received then the activity may be cancelled.**

Charges will be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for pupils who are receiving Income Support or Family Credit. The Head Teacher will tell all parents of the right to claim free activities if they are in receipt of these benefits. A voluntary contribution will be requested by the school for such activities.

(St Mary's & St Peter's Primary School will follow the relevant legislation as contained in the Education Reform Act 1988: Section 106, - 111, 117, and 118. The guidance is contained in the DCSF circular 2/89: Charges for School Activities).

Photocopying

Any photocopying that is requested by parents relating to their child, under the 'Freedom of Information Act', will be charged at **10p per sheet and 20p for any colour printing**. *The information publication scheme details this process and other charges relating to the Freedom of Information Act.*

Private Fees

As a school we receive large numbers of reference requests for independent schools and this proves to be a significant burden on staff time. Writing reports for independent schools are time consuming and is not part of the required duties of a maintained school. The governors have a policy of charging a £50.00 fee to parents for references (payable in advance).

This is necessary to cover the administration costs involved in preparing references.

There are 2 ways you can have your reference request dealt with:-

1. We can offer a standard SMSP reference for a one off £50.00 which we would send to any school asking for a reference.
2. We can send a copy of the previous year's school report for free.

External providers

In some circumstances external providers are engaged to provide services such as after school clubs and they charge parents independently of the school. In such situations the school will charge a levy of £12.50 per club per hourly session or a figure to be agreed with the school for one off services provided. This is to recoup some of the associated costs to the school. In exceptional cases this may be waived at the discretion of the headteacher.

The Governing Body may, from time to time, amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for pupils.

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