



St Catherine's Catholic School

Charging and Remissions Policy

Responsible Person	Headteacher & School Business Manager
Ratified by	Governing Body
Date Ratified	September 2020
Review Date	September 2021
Review Cycle	Annually



ST CATHERINE'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
MISSION STATEMENT

Life Faith Love Strength
Success Belief Together Joy Unity

ST CATHERINE'S
CATHOLIC
SCHOOL
aims to:

Be a vibrant, inclusive, Catholic community where there is mutual love, service and respect.

Offer opportunities to everyone on their unique journey to nurture their strengths and potential.

Encourage everyone to positively serve our society and the world by living our Gospel values.

Celebrate and empower women of the future.

1. Aims

The Governing Body of St Catherine's Catholic School recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities including trips, clubs and residential experiences, can make towards our students' education and experiences.

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the students of the school and as additional optional activities.

We aim to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made.

2. Legislation and guidance

The Education Act 1996 provided a new statutory framework for charging for school activities. This Act makes it clear that all education provided at school during school hours should be free but there are exceptions when a charge may be levied and this is outlined below. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

The Governing Body cannot charge for:

- An admission application to any maintained school
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- Education provided outside of school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.
- Tuition for students learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school or part of religious education
- Entry for prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for students. We hope that parents will contribute to a school fund to facilitate the delivery of additional activities during school hours. The present annual contribution sought is £20 per student.

However the Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school. The Governing Body will from time to time, review and amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution and no student will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.

3. Definition of In or Out of School Hours

Education during school hours: no charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Education provided during school hours must be free this includes materials and equipment and transport provided in school hours by the school to carry pupils between the school and an activity school hours are those when the school is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the school day.

Education partly during school hours: sometimes an activity may happen partly during and partly outside school hours. If most of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours, that activity counts as taking place entirely in school hours and no charge may be made. Time spent on travel only counts as being during school hours if the travel takes place during school hours. As an example, a long distance trip might involve much travel before and after normal school hours but if the time spent at the destination fell mainly within school hours the trip would count as happening in school time and be free of charge. By contrast a trip that involved leaving school an hour or so earlier than usual in the afternoon but then went on until quite late in the evening would be classified as taking place outside school time and charges would then be allowed.

Education outside school hours: 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 do not form part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education. In addition 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 Act 1996 describes activities that can be charged for as "optional extras". It is up to the governing body providing the activities to decide whether to make a charge or not.

Residential Activities

Special rules apply for residential activities. A trip counts as falling within school time if the number of school sessions missed by the pupils amounts to half or more of the number of half-days taken up by the activity. Each school day is normally divided into two sessions and each 24-hour period is divided into two half-days beginning at noon and at midnight.

On this basis, a term-time trip from noon on Wednesday to 9.00p.m. on Sunday would last for nine half-days, include five school sessions and would count as taking place in school time. A trip from noon on Thursday to 9.00p.m. on Sunday would count as seven half-days, include three school sessions and would be classified for charging as taking

place outside school time. If 50% or more of a half-day is spent on a residential trip, the whole of that half-day should be treated as spent on the trip.

If a residential activity takes place largely during school time, meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination, or is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge may be made either for the education or for the cost of travel. However, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for pupils whose parents are receiving:

- Universal Credit
- support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit (providing that they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs, that does not exceed £16,191 for the year 2018/2019)
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit.

4. Charging for visits

The teacher organising the visit should always meet with the School Business Manager to agree the following items:

- The total cost of the visit
- How much of the cost will come from school
- How much each parent will need to pay or be asked to voluntarily contribute towards the cost of the visit
- How much spending/pocket money students will reasonably need (especially important for trips which involve a residential element)
- Use of any surplus funds, i.e. will they be returned to parents or retained for future visits.

Parents should be notified as early as possible of the above using the standard trip and visits letter. This is important as this allows parents to make financial preparations. Many parents find it helpful to gauge the value of the visit if they have information relating to the constituent costs of the visit, i.e., transport, accommodation, food.

Voluntary contributions

Although schools cannot charge for school-time activities, they may still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind) to make school funds go further. All requests to parents for voluntary contributions must make it quite clear that the contributions would be voluntary. Governing body makes it clear that children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, this will be explained to them at the planning stage.

Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible and there is no way to make up the shortfall, **the activity will be cancelled**. The essential point is that no pupil will be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot, or

will not, make a contribution of any kind. The school must first decide which class, or group of pupils, will benefit from the activity and then look for voluntary contributions, either for that activity, or by general fund-raising.

Visits which occur during school hours must be provided free of charge. However, parents can be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the trip. In reality the value of the requested contributions equates to the total cost of the visit and therefore if insufficient voluntary contributions are forthcoming the visit may have to be cancelled – parents must be notified of this. Students whose parents/guardians do not contribute cannot be discriminated against.

5. Communication to Parents

a) No Contribution required

A letter about the activity is sent out to parents and contains a reply slip (with space for parental signature) and must contain the wording “Under the school’s charging policy there will be no charge for this activity”.

b) Contributions required

Parental permission should be obtained in the following way:

- A letter about the activity is sent out to parents and contains a reply slip (with space for parental signature) and also a section on meeting the costs of the visit. The letter must be accompanied by the “**Policy Statement for Financial Support**” provided in **Appendix 2**.
- The letter should contain the following wording:

“This activity costs £.... per student and is based on student places. Under the school’s charging policy, this activity is offered with a request for a contribution of £.... A non-refundable deposit of £... is required by

If you require financial support or would prefer to pay by instalments then please read the “**Policy Statement for Financial Support**” and write to the Business Manager who will consider each individual application on its own merit. No student will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay but the school reserves the right to cancel this activity if sufficient funds are not raised by voluntary contributions or fewer thanstudents take up this opportunity”.

6. Optional Extras

The full charge for providing optional extras may be charged to individual students but will not exceed the cost of providing the actual activity. A charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

Optional extras also include:

- 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;
 - part of religious education.
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the governing body have 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 (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made. The stated cost of an optional extra visit will not include an element of subsidy for students whose families do not meet the full charge.

Communication to parents regarding optional extras:

A letter about the activity/trip is sent out to parents and will contain the following wording

“Under the school’s charging policy, because this activity takes place wholly/mainly outside school hours and is optional, places will be offered to students who pay the full cost which is £....”

In addition parents will be asked to sign a declaration, including the following:

I understand that:

- current legislation permits the School to ask for the full cost of the visit;
- current legislation does not require the School to arrange subsidies for the visit
- if insufficient numbers of students opt for the visit then the visit may have to be cancelled.
- my child cannot attend this ‘optional extra’ visit if full payment is not made by myself/ourselves.
- the deposit required for a place on the trip is 10% of the total cost or the amount stated by the travel operator and payable 1 week from the date of this declaration.
- Regular payments must be made towards the cost of the trip as stated in trip letter to parents (usually 3 equal instalments, 1 month apart).
- Full payment is due at the latest 7 school session days prior to the start date of the trip. Any outstanding payments must be discussed by the parent/guardian with the Finance Manager to ensure students can go on the trip.

- Refunds of deposits, full payments and partial payments in relation to cancellations will be subject to a review by the Finance Manager and will depend on:
 - any costs incurred for cancellation through the travel agency/trip organiser
 - whether a replacement traveller could be found.

See appendix 3 –Booking Terms and Conditions

7. Music Tuition

There is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Education to specify circumstances where charges can be made for music tuition. The new regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition. Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges will only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the national curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s).

8. Ingredients/Materials/Equipment (charging in kind)

The Governing Body reserves the right to charge for ingredients, materials or equipment (or the provision of them by parents) or require them to be provided if the parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the ‘finished product’. This is directly relevant for the cost of materials/ingredients for the following subjects: Science, Technology, Art.

9. Broken equipment/Damage/Replacement

The Governors will allow the school to ask students and/or their parents to contribute towards the cost of replacement items where these were damaged or broken as a direct result of misconduct on the student’s part. This does not in any way detract from the teaching staff’s duty to brief students thoroughly and to manage a calm and safe working environment for the students. This may include the purchase of a replacement planner, should the student lose their planner, deface or damage it.

10. Remissions

The Governing Body may remit in full or in part the cost of any activity for particular groups of parents, for example, in the case of family hardship. The criteria for remissions are:

1. Universal Credit
2. Support under part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
3. Child Tax Credit (providing that they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, assessed by Her Majesty’s Revenue & Customs, that does not exceed £16,191 for the year 2018/2019)
4. The guarantee element of State Pension Credit.

When arranging a chargeable activity such parents will be invited in confidence for the remission of charges in part. When arranging a chargeable activity, such parents are

invited in confidence, for the remission of charges in full or in part. Authorisation for such remission will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with the Executive Headteacher.

11. Examinations

The Governing Body may recover any fee in respect of the entry of a registered student at the school for a public examination in any syllabus for that examination either

1. where the school has not prepared the student for the examination, fees will be charged in full together with the appropriate administration charges.
2. the student fails without good reason to meet any examination requirements of that syllabus
3. for a re-sit examination taken at the student's request
4. where a student opts to take an examination against the school's advice
5. for non-attendance at an examination without good reason
6. where a result is contested at a student's request.

12. School Minibus

Charges will not be made for transporting pupils to or from the school premises where the governing body or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated or in connection with an educational visit.

Charges for use of the school mini-bus will be made if used (instead of travelling by coach/train/taxi) for a school trip/activity as per Sections 3 and 4 above.

N.B. Only the school's pupils, staff or parents may travel at a charge in the school mini-bus. Charges can only be levied if the school has a permit issued under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. Permits can be acquired via the Traffic Commissioner (Department of Transport). No permit is required if no charge is made to the user. Charges made for travel will cover only actual costs incurred, including depreciation; the service will not make a profit for the school.

13. Surplus

Where charges have been levied for activities, and a surplus of income over expenditure generated, rebates will be made, based on the following formula:

Where the activity costs up to £40, rebates will be made if the surplus per person is 5% of the trip or cost or £10, whichever is greater.

On all occasions when charges are being made or contributions sought for teaching and learning activities the Headteacher may decide to contribute from the school budget to assist in cases of hardship.

APPENDIX 1 – Example Letters

Exchanges

RE: Spanish Exchange – Extra Curricular Trip

We are writing to inform you of this year's Spanish Exchange at St Catherine's Catholic School. We are organising the exchange visit with our partner school in Barcelona, northeastern Spain, for students in Year 10. This visit is open to all students studying Spanish.

An exchange visit is of immense benefit from both the linguistic and cultural points of view. However this trip is an extra curricular activity and not part of the school curriculum. We are only able to offer a limited number of places due to extra costs to the school and the number of Spanish students available.

This activity costs £300 per student and is based on 25 student places. Under the school's charging policy, this activity is offered with a request for a contribution of £300. A non-refundable deposit of £150 is required by the end of June to cover the cost of the flight. If you require financial support or would prefer to pay by instalments then please read the "Policy Statement for Financial Support" and write to the Headteacher who will consider each individual application on its own merit. No student will be discriminated against on the grounds of inability to pay but the school reserves the right to cancel this activity if sufficient funds are not raised by voluntary contributions or fewer than 25 students take up this opportunity

Please be aware that under the new legislation, there is a possibility that parents and any adults aged 18yrs or over living in your household will be asked to be checked by the Criminal Records Bureau (DBS).

I would be very grateful if you could provide me with the following information by returning the slip below before **June 11th**.

Yours sincerely,

APPENDIX 2

If an activity takes place during school hours and a request for a voluntary contribution is sought, the following policy statement must be sent to parents in addition to the letter. This can be printed on the reverse of the letter to parents if required or sent out as a separate page.

Policy Statement for Financial Support for Trips and Educational Visits

Statement:

As far as practically possible, children and young people should not be excluded from taking parts in trips or visits organised by the school due to financial costs. However, available funding is limited and therefore the criteria for accessing financial support should be clear, transparent and equitable.

1. All applications for financial support must be made directly to the Headteacher, in advance of the visit.
2. To be eligible for assistance the parent/carer must be able to prove that they are in receipt of the following benefits:
 - a) Universal Credit
 - b) Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - c) Child Tax Credit (providing that they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs, that does not exceed £16,191 for the year 2018/2019)
 - d) The guarantee element of State Pension Credit.
3. In cases of hardship where the above criteria are not met, the Governing Body would be prepared to take payments in instalments, even when the full payment is not received by the date that the visit takes place, or would consider any individual application on its own merit

In cases where there are insufficient funds for an educational visit to take place, it may be cancelled.

APPENDIX 3 –St Catherine’s School’s Booking Terms and Conditions

Deposits

By paying a deposit for a school trip, you are confirming your permission for your child to attend this trip and also that you are agreeing to pay for the school trip in full, to the timescale set out in the payment schedule. The deposit is non-refundable.

Cancellations

In the event of a cancellation by yourself, St Catherine’s School will reserve the right to charge you for any cancellation charges made by the Travel Company, depending upon the timescale of the cancellation. If you are considering cancellation of a trip, please contact the Business Manager at the school to discuss any charges that would have to be met in order for you to make an appropriate decision.

Cancellation of a trip on departure due to medical reasons.

If your child falls ill just before travel, and you decide to keep your child at home, the trip insurance will only be able to give you a full or partial refund upon receipt of a medical certificate signed by your doctor. The school will not be able to give any refunds without medical evidence.

Cancellation of your child’s place on a trip

The school reserves the right to cancel your child’s place on a school trip in the event of inappropriate behaviour. In such circumstances, the school will make a full refund.

Serious inappropriate behaviour whilst on a trip

For serious inappropriate behaviour the student will be sent home early and it will be the responsibility of the parent to arrange suitable travel and supervision at your own cost.

Travel Documents

It is your responsibility to ensure that your child’s passport and EHIC card are up to date prior to travel. The school is unable to make any refund on a trip, if your child is unable to travel due to out of date documents.

Personal Property

Your child’s personal property, including baggage, is your own responsibility at all times, unless any loss or damage is due to our negligence.