



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Charging and Remissions Policy

September 2016



This policy should be read in light of our Mission Statement that states:

'At St. Joseph's, we live, love and learn by the example of Jesus'

The Governing body wish to align this policy with the Local Authority's charging policy as stated in the Handbook of Financial Regulations Part3 Section 11.12 and appendices B&C.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that additional activities can make towards a child's social and academic education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for all children, and also as additional optional activities.

1.1 Charges

The Governing Body reserve the right to authorise the school to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school.

- The full cost for each child for activities deemed to be optional extras taking place largely outside normal school hours. e.g. clubs
- The full cost for optional activities outside the National Curriculum
- The cost of ingredients and or materials, or require them to be provided, if the parents have indicated that they wish to keep the finished product.
- The cost to repair or replace items wilfully damaged, or loaned and subsequently damaged or lost.

1.2 Voluntary contributions

For trips and activities, which form part of the children's curriculum, a voluntary contribution may be asked for. Parents may therefore be asked to contribute the full or part of the cost voluntarily towards:

- Trips to facilities such as museums, theatres and activity centres, including the cost of transport and entrance fees.
- Tuition by outside experts where the school cannot provide the facilities or expertise e.g. swimming lessons.
- Visits in school by "experts" who are extending the children's knowledge and experience.
- Group instrumental tuition that is required by the National Curriculum

These outings, trips and visits may operate only if parents provide the voluntary contributions. It may therefore be necessary to cancel any such outing, trip or visit if insufficient funds are forthcoming. In this respect we rely on the support and understanding of the parents, who we hope value these activities and understand that they are organised for the good of the children. Provision is made for a contribution to be made on behalf of parents who have genuine financial hardship.

- Nursery voluntary contributions

1.3 Sales

The school may sell to parents items that it purchases in bulk on their behalf, such as uniform, pens, water bottles. These may only be paid for in advance.

1.4 Calculating charges

For activities which must be paid for by all participants, such as activities outside school hours or optional activities in school time, the charge per pupil is calculated by dividing the total cost of the activity by the number of children taking part.

For activities which are paid for by voluntary contributions the charge per pupil is calculated by dividing the total cost of the activity by the number of pupils who potentially will be taking part, irrespective of whether they actually contribute to the cost.

For sales items the cost will be calculated by dividing the total cost of the items including VAT by the number of items plus up to 20% mark up. Profit from sales will be kept in the fund account and used for the children's benefit.

2.1 Remission and Hardship

The Education Act 1988 requires that charges be remitted in relation to the cost of individual musical tuition in the case of children whose parents are in receipt of benefits.

In the case of genuine hardship the school will provide assistance where it has the funds to do so, or assist parents in applying to outside agencies. Parents will be made aware of this and asked to apply to the head teacher. Parents will be asked to supply details of hardship and to sign a voluntary agreement on what contribution they are able to make and what contribution the school will seek funding for.

3 Communication about charges

3.1 Residential trips

Parents will be informed about residential trips a minimum of 8 months in advance.

- They will be provided with a full breakdown of all the costs involved.
- They will be provided with a clear schedule of what payments are required by when and be invited to make regular weekly/monthly payments.
- They will be advised that the two payment is non-refundable should their child not attend the trip
- All payments will be acknowledged by entry onto a payment record card returned to the child after each payment.
- They will be invited to contact the school to discuss financial hardship.

3.2 Trips, outings and visits

Parents will be informed about trips, outings and visits at least three weeks in advance. They will be given a breakdown of the costs involved and be asked to make a voluntary contribution to cover the cost. They will be advised that if insufficient contributions are received the trip may have to be cancelled. They will be asked to pay the exact amount and be advised that change will not be provided. Any over payment will be deemed a contribution to school funds.

3.3 Dinner money

At the beginning of each half term the amount for dinners will be published in the newsletter. Parents will be expected to pay half termly. Parents for whom this represents a hardship will need to apply to pay weekly.

Statements will be sent out towards the end of the half term to remind parents about any monies outstanding.

3.4 Sales

On application to the office a list of items for sale and price list will be supplied. When prices are revised an up dated price list will be made available to all parents via the newsletter.

4 Refunds

4.1 Residential journey

If there is a surplus on a residential journey, a refund to the nearest pound will be offered, if this is more than £5.

4.2 Trips, outing and visits

On day trips and activities a similar refund will be offered if the surplus is greater than £1. Children who are unable to attend activities or trips through illness will be given all available refunds i.e. where payment has not had to be made in advance or where the school has not incurred a financial liability to pay for that place.

4.3 Activities outside school hours e.g. clubs

Once payment has been received and a place allocated to a child a refund cannot be offered as the school has a financial liability to the outside provider. In exceptional circumstances if a waiting list exists and another child can take up the place the parent may be offered a refund for the sessions where the school has received payment from the replacement child.

4.4 Sales

Unless the item is faulty refunds will not be offered on items sold by the school. Uniform may be exchanged for larger or smaller sizes within one week of purchase.

5. Debt management

5.1 Stopped payments

- Where the school has a parent's cheque returned by the bank as unpaid, a letter will be sent immediately to the parent by the bursar asking for payment in cash.
- After 2 weeks if payment has not been received, a second letter will be sent from the Head teacher again asking for payment in cash, and inviting the parent to contact the Head if there is financial hardship.
- After a further two weeks, if no payment has been received and there has been no communication from the parent, a letter will be sent to the parent advising them that the debt will be passed to the County Secretaries Department for legal action to recover the debt.
- A letter is then to be sent to the County Secretaries Department together with copies of all the correspondence to the parent.

5.2 Dinner monies

The amount for each week will be published in the monthly newsletter and parents can choose to pay either weekly or for each half term.

If payment is not received two weeks before the end of the half term a statement will be sent home via the child requesting payment before the end of the half term.

In the first week of the following half term a statement and letter from the bursar will be sent in the post to the home address requesting payment for the preceding half term and that half term,

If payment has not been received after two weeks a letter will be sent from the Head requesting immediate payment. In this letter they will be advised that if payment is not received by X date the debt will be passed to the County Council for recovery and that their child will not be able to have school dinners until the debt has been cleared.

In the last week of the half term if payment has still not been received the debt should be passed to the County Council together with copies of all the letters to the parent and the child put onto no dinners on the dinner system.

If a decision is made by the Head not to follow this process if it is thought that there are extenuating circumstances, assistance will be offered particularly to apply for free school meals. This must be documented.

5.3 Residential journey

During the communication process about the year 6 residential journey, parents will be made aware of the facility to apply for hardship assistance.

- Regular statements will be sent typically two to three weeks before key payment dates to remind parents.
- If payment is not received in the first instance phone contact will be made by the bursar to establish if there are circumstances of which we are not aware.
- This will be followed up by a letter from the Head reminding that payment is required by X date and that if payment or communication is not received the child's place may be cancelled.
- Optionally a parent may be offered extended payment time allowing them to complete payment after the child has been on the trip i.e. during year 6. This will be recorded in a voluntary agreement that the Head and parent will sign.

Review Date: September 2017