



CHARGING POLICY

January 2016

MISSION STATEMENT

At St John the Baptist Catholic Primary School:

- we encourage each other to live our lives based on Gospel values;
- we acknowledge and nurture the unique gifts in every individual;
- we have a positive vision of our Faith;
- we ensure that prayer, reflection and worship form an integral part of every day;
- we recognise each person as a vital part of God's creation;
- we lay the foundations for successful, lifelong learning;
- we are at the heart of our Parish, welcoming, supporting and working in partnership with families.

Introduction

This policy is drawn up in accordance with the requirements of section 457 of the Education Act, 1996 as amended by Section 200 of the Education Act 2002.

There are four principles underlying the provisions on charging:

1. That education in school should be free.
2. That activities offered wholly or mainly during normal school teaching time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability to help meet the cost.
3. That there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education, but that LAs and schools have the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours.
4. That LAs and schools have the right to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school, or in support of any activity organized by the school, whether during or outside school hours.

The Policy

The school recognizes that there are a number of activities which will only take place if parental contributions are available, but it stresses that no child will be excluded from any activity organized by the school because of the inability of their parents to pay such a contribution. However, if insufficient contributions are made then the school reserves the right to cancel an activity.

Optional Visits Wholly or Mainly Outside School Hours

E.g. an evening trip to the theatre, or a Saturday visit to a wild life center

It is the intention of the school to charge the full cost of visits which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours, and which are not provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and not required in order to fulfill statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education. The cost could include travel, insurance, admission charges, meals. These visits will proceed only if all those who wish to go pay the full cost of the trip in advance.

Visits wholly or mainly during school hours

E.g. visit to Truro museum to study 'The Victorians', or a visit to the recycling center

It is the intention of the school to invite voluntary contributions toward the cost of visits which take place wholly or mainly during school hours and which may, or may not, be provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and may, or may not, be required in order to fulfill statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education. The cost could include travel, insurance, admission charges and to cover supervisors' travel costs. Where parents are unable to pay the cost of a trip, they should discuss their situation with the Headteacher. However, the school will reserve the right to cancel the trip if there is insufficient financial support and the costs exceed the monies within the 'School Trip Budget'. The school will always aim to give parents sufficient warning of dates and costs of trips.

Board and Lodging Charges on Residential Visits

It is the intention of the school to charge the full cost of board and lodging on visits taking place wholly or mainly during school hours, or if out of school hours, provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or required in order to fulfill statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or to religious education. Where the parents are in receipt of income support, jobseeker's allowance (income based), child tax credit (but only when the recipient does not also receive working tax credit and has an annual income of less than £13,910), support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, guarantee element of State Pension Credit or disability working allowance, the board and lodging charges must be remitted, and this cost will have to be met from within the school's funds i.e., for educational activities the subsidy may come from the delegated budget; for social activities the subsidy may come from private funds (these can also be used for education activities). Voluntary contributions towards the costs of transport, insurance, admission charges, etc. incurred during residential trips will be requested and could become a necessary prerequisite for the visit taking place.

Individual Tuition in the Playing of a Musical Instrument

It is not the intention of the school to charge for such tuition where it is provided by LA employed schools' staff, whether in or out of school hours. However where tuition or ensemble activities are provided by external agencies and peripatetic teachers a charge will be made to pupils concerned.

Re-sits of Prescribed Public Examinations Where no Further Preparation Has Been Provided by the School

It is the intention of the LA to charge the full cost of the re-sit.

Entry to Examinations which are not Prescribed in Regulations Issued by the Secretary of State

It is the intention of the school to charge the full cost of the entry

Charges for Ingredients, Materials and Equipment

The school is prepared to provide any ingredients, materials, equipment needed for the delivery of the curriculum. Parents who are willing to contribute in cash or in kind, are encouraged to do so on a voluntary basis. The school may charge for, or invite parents to supply, ingredients, materials and equipment if parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product.

Charges for Breakages and Fines

Where breakages or loss of equipment (e.g. reading books) occur the cost of replacement items will be billed to parents.

Recovery of Unpaid Charges

Sums payable by parents for wasted examination fees, for optional extras to which they had agreed, or for board and lodging, are recoverable as civil debts. However, in an endeavour to avoid such measures being necessary, the school will request contributions to be paid in advance when appropriate. If insufficient monies are paid, the school will reserve the right to cancel the arrangements.

Communications with Parents

The school has examples of model letters for communicating with parents about charges to be raised.

Definitions

The most important definition concerns whether an activity takes place within, or out of, school hours. If the number of school sessions missed by the pupils is less than 50% of the number of half days taken up by the activity, the activity is

deemed to take place outside school hours. If the number of school sessions is 50% or more of the number of half days, the activity is deemed to take place during school hours. Numbers of half days, or of school sessions, are to be rounded up as follows:

- where 6 or more hours in a half day is spent on a residential visit, the whole of that half day counts as having been spent on the visit;
- where half or more of a school session is devoted to a residential visit, the entire session counts as having been spent on the visit.

Summary of the Main Points on Charging

There are four principles underlying the provisions on charging:

1. That education in schools should be free.
2. That activities offered wholly or mainly during normal school teaching time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost.
3. That there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education, but that LAs and schools have the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours.
4. That LAs and schools have the right to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school, or in support of any activity organized by the school, whether during or outside school hours.
5. Optional trips wholly or mainly (as defined in the Circular) outside school hours will be charged at full cost.
6. Trips wholly or mainly (as defined in the Circular) during school hours may be funded by voluntary contributions. No child may be excluded from such a trip because the parents are unable to pay a voluntary contribution.
7. Board and lodging costs on residential trips will be charged except to those parents in receipt of income support, jobseeker's allowance (income based), child tax credit (but only when the recipient does not also receive working tax credit and has an annual income of less than £13,910), support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, guarantee element of State Pension Credit or disability working allowance.
8. Individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument by a teacher employed by the LA in or out of school hours will not be charged for. However where tuition or ensemble activities are provided by external agencies and peripatetic teachers, a charge may be made to pupils concerned.
9. Re-sits of prescribed examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school will be charged for.
10. Entry to examinations which are not prescribed in regulations issued by the Secretary of State will be charged for.
11. The school will invite voluntary contributions towards the cost of ingredients, materials and equipment where parents have expressed the wish in advance to have the finished product.
12. The school will make charges for breakages, loss and damage to property.
13. Governors may make provision towards the costs incurred by the children of parents who are unable to make a voluntary contribution.