



ST PETER'S
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

CHARGES & REMISSIONS POLICY

Public Sector Equality Duty

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for those with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Section 34 of the Schools Funding Agreement, the Academy Trust is required to determine the charging and remissions policies required to address Section 457 of the Education Act 1996 (updated 2013) and for these to be approved by the Secretary of State for Education.

The Governing Body confirm their belief that this policy is in line with legislation.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities including school visits, afterschool clubs and residential experiences can make towards a students' personal and social education.

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

(Throughout this policy, the term "parents" means all those having parental responsibility for a child.)

1 GENERAL PRINCIPLE

The general principle within the Act is that no charge will be made for any books, materials, instruments, equipment or transport for use in connection with education if the education is:

- Within school hours (but excluding the mid-day break)
- Required for the National Curriculum but out of school hours
- For statutory religious education
- For a prescribed public examination prepared for by the school

However, there are exceptions where the school can make charges.

2 EXCEPTIONS

Charges **are** permitted under the Act to meet the costs of the following:

- Board and lodging on residential educational trips
- A student's travel costs and costs of entrance fees etc.
- Staff costs including travel, board and lodging
- Non educational trips
- Music tuition and the attendant hiring of musical instruments where the tuition does not form part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination
- Materials/ingredients required to produce a finished product made in school (e.g. in art, design, food or technology lessons), where parents have agreed in advance that the finished article should be owned by the parent/carer or the student
- Entering a student for a public examination which is not prescribed in regulations, and for preparing the student for such an examination out of school hours
- Entering a student for a public examination against the wishes of the school
- Re-marking an examination paper where the re-mark is requested by the parent or student
- Re-sits of prescribed public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school
- Voluntary optional extras provided outside of school hours (or mainly outside school hours)

In all cases where a permitted charge is made, parents will be told the amount in advance. Charges will not be set with the intention of exceeding the actual cost per student incurred.

3 VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

The Act permits voluntary contributions to be requested for any specific visit and/or activity either inside or outside of school time. In all cases where voluntary contributions are requested, parents will be told the amount in advance. The level of voluntary contribution requested will not be set with the intention of exceeding the actual cost per student incurred. No individual student will be excluded from a visit or activity if their parent chooses not to pay the voluntary contribution. However, the visit or activity may have to be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received.

All parents are invited to make donations to the School Donations Fund (previously the Development Fund) and where appropriate, encouraged to register in the Gift Aid Scheme.

4 OTHER CHARGES

To actively engage in learning, be ready to learn and be able to learn in many different contexts, it is essential that students have the right basic equipment e.g. pens, pencils, rulers, calculators. Whilst there is no legal or formal requirement for parents to provide these items the school actively encourages parents and students to purchase them. Some optional items of equipment may on occasion be offered for sale by the school e.g. calculators, revision guides etc.

There may be a charge when a student represents the school in an organised activity (eg as a member of a school team). Any charge will be at the school's discretion but will not be greater than the total cost of the activity (including transport), divided between the number of students taking part.

Students are provided with a small allowance each term for essential photocopying/printing. Photocopying/printing which is not required by a member of staff may be charged for.

The school will seek payment from parents for damage to or loss of school property caused wilfully or negligently by their child.

5 REFUNDS

Refunds of charges or voluntary contributions received will be made in the following circumstances:

- Cancellation of trips or activities due to circumstances beyond the student's control
- Voluntary cancellation of participation in a trip providing the place can be filled by another. Refunds will be reduced by the amount of any non-refundable deposits made
- The school deciding that a student should not take part in a trip or activity for whatever reason. Refunds will be reduced by the amount of any non-refundable deposits made
- Wherever a student, having entered for a public examination against the school's wishes, achieves a grade in that examination
- If an examination re-mark requested by a parent or student is successful (the reimbursement of fees will be made by the examination board)
- Any balance remaining of a planned activity which exceeds £10 per paying participant will be refunded.

In other circumstances, any refund would be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

6 SUPPORT FUND

Where charges are to be made to parents, or voluntary contributions sought, these will be advised in advance and collected prior to the activity. Requests for help from parents on eligible benefits will be considered and assistance provided within the limits of any support funds, such as Pupil Premium, that may be available. Complete confidentiality will be observed in all such matters.

Eligible benefits are those that also entitle students to free school meals and can be reviewed at <https:bcpcouncil.gov.uk/Schools-and-Learning/Free-school-meals>

Where a parent does not receive an eligible benefit, the school will nonetheless consider sympathetically requests for assistance. The Governors provide limited funds each year in a 'hardship' fund which may be used to assist parents with significant need, but who do not qualify for benefits above. It is also possible to agree a phasing of contributions, provided that all such phased contributions have been made by the time the trip or event takes place.

Any parent may apply for financial assistance towards costs of trips or activities and should do so by writing to the Headteacher – letters should confirm the activity to be supported and confirm the level of parental contribution that will be paid. Each case will be considered individually.

Reviewed January 2023