



Great Aycliffe  
Catholic Schools'  
Federation

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

**Mission Statement**

*We believe that each person is unique and created in God's image.*

*In our federation, we provide a distinctive Catholic education, where each child is loved, nurtured, inspired and challenged to aspire to excellence and develop their individual abilities for themselves and others*

**Charging Policy**

## **Introduction**

This policy is the General Policy on charging, drawn up by the Governing Body of The Great Aycliffe Catholic Schools' Federation. It sets out to explain when and when not the schools will charge parents and others for school activities and school trips.

## **Charging Policies**

This policy complies with the Education Act 1996. It also complies with the General Policy on Charging drawn up by Durham County Council.

## **Education**

The schools will not charge for:-

- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of materials, books, instruments or other necessary 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 pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of Religious Education.
- Tuition for pupils 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 pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of Religious Education.
- Entry for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school.
- Examination re-sits if the pupil is being prepared for re-sits at the school. However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents.

The schools will charge for:-

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child's parents wish their child to own them.
- Optional Extras (see Appendix 1).
- Music Tuition in limited circumstances (see page 3).
- Before and after school care.

## **Voluntary Contributions**

The schools may ask parents or others for voluntary contributions to benefit the school or school activities. Voluntary contributions should be in cash.

If the proposed activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Governing Body or the Headteachers will make this clear to the parents at the outset. The Governing Body or Headteachers will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution and that no child will be excluded from any activity because their parents are unwilling or unable to contribute towards the expense.

If sufficient voluntary contributions are not raised to fund a trip or activity, then it must be cancelled.

## **Residential Trips**

Schools cannot charge for:-

- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours.
- Education provided on any trip that take place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of Religious Education.
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.

Schools can charge for:-

- Board and lodging, including that of necessary supervisory staff, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When the school informs parents about a forthcoming trip, we will make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:-

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, providing that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) does not exceed £15,575 (September 2008)
- Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit

If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay towards the cost of the trip, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. If sufficient voluntary contributions are not raised to fund a trip or activity, then it must be cancelled.

Every child will be treated equally when allocating places on school trips.

A flow chart giving guidance on charging for educational visits is given in Appendix 3. Information on charging and exemptions from charges is given in Appendix 2. Parents will be given this information when a trip is proposed.

### **Music Tuition**

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

Charges may be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, for either an individual or a group of up to four, provided that the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum, or part of a public examination syllabus that the pupil is being prepared for at the school.

The costs, or a proportion of the costs, for providing teaching staff for tuition in playing a musical instrument outside of school hours can be charged if the teaching is not part of the National Curriculum, or part of a public examination syllabus that the pupil is being prepared for at the school. This is an optional extra.

### **Transport**

Schools cannot charge for:-

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises where the Children's Services Authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport.
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the Governing Body or Children's Services Authority has arranged for pupils to be educated.
- Transport that enables a pupils to meet an examination requirement when that pupil has been prepared for that examination at the school.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip.

Schools can charge for:-

- Any other transport. This is a permitted optional extra (see Appendix 1).

### **Remissions Policy**

The Governing Body has a policy setting out the circumstances in which they will remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would be payable to them in accordance with the Charging Policy.

Parents providing proof that they are receiving the following benefits will always be considered for partial or total remit of any payable charges for activities in addition to those exempt for residential trips:-

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, providing that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) does not exceed £15,575 (September 2008)
- Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit

The Governing Body will consider support for any pupil whose parents have reason to appeal in writing for exemption. Any appeal for this support will be considered by the Children, School and Community Committee of the Governing Body (in confidence) and their decision given in writing will be final.

### **Education Partly During School Hours**

Where an activity takes place partly during school hours and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of Religious Education.

### **Non-Residential Activities**

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place completely during school hours. Time spent on travel in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on the activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place completely outside of school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

### **Residential Visits**

If the number of school sessions taken up by the trip is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. A "half-day" means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Note the following examples:-

#### **Example 1: Visit during School Hours**

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. Using the above calculation, this example trip would equate to nine half-day sessions, including five sessions of normal school hours (i.e. more than 50% in school time). This trip is deemed to have taken place in school hours.

#### **Example 2: Visit Outside of School Hours**

Pupils are away from noon on Thursday to 9pm on Sunday. Using the above calculation, this example trip would equate to seven half-day sessions, including three sessions of normal school hours (i.e. less than 50% in school time). This trip is deemed to have taken place outside of school hours.