

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Policy on Charging and Remissions

St Joseph's strives to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities - both on and off site and within and outside the curriculum - regardless of their family's financial means. To ensure transparency in setting charges and ensure all children are able to access all the provision on offer, this policy sets out the School's approach to charging and remissions. It has been informed by national guidance.

This policy does not apply to charges made and determined by other organisations offering activities and services on the school premises.

(1) Activities during school hours

With the exception of music tuition no charge will be made for activities provided during school hours.

No charge will be made for education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours, although a voluntary contribution may be sought.

No charge will be made for transport during school hours.

A charge will be made to cover the cost of ingredients, materials, books and/or equipment where parents/guardians have confirmed in advance that they wish to own the finished product.

(2) Activities outside school hours (non-residential)

No charge will be made for an activity that takes place outside school hours when it is:

- part of the National Curriculum
- part of religious education

(3) Activities that take place partly during school hours either on or off site (non-residential).

Where the majority of time spent on a non-residential activity is within school hours, the charging regime will be as if it is fully within school hours.

If the majority of the time spent on a non-residential activity is outside school hours, the charging regime will be as if it happens fully outside school hours.

(4) Best Value

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

(5) Breakfast and After School Club

Charges will be made for the Breakfast and After School with the level of fees and any remissions to be set and reviewed regularly by the governing body. Refer to paragraph 10.

(6) Damage to property and breakages

A charge may be made for replacement of any item of school property that is lost or damaged.

(7) Debt Recovery

The School will take all reasonable measures to collect debts as part of its management of public funds. In doing so, it will observe the relevant financial regulations and any other legal requirements.

(8) Music tuition

No charge will be made if the music tuition is an essential part of the national curriculum.

No charge will be made for instrumental and vocal tuition within school hours for “looked after” children.

Charges will be made for instrumental and vocal tuition requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors within school hours, whether offered to an individual or group of pupils. Details of charges are at the school office.

Where charges are made for instrumental and vocal tuition they may be remitted partly or in full for pupils on free school meals as well as in certain other circumstances, in order to ensure specialist music tuition is accessible and affordable for all children.

(9) Optional Activities

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as “optional extras” .

These are

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of the National curriculum nor part of religious education.
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the LA/Governing Body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education.

Where a charge is made, the total collected will not exceed the cost of providing the activity and no parent will be asked to subsidise the cost to other pupils by paying more than an amount equal to the total cost of the activity divided by the number of pupils participating.

Costs that are legally recoverable are:

- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra
- non-teaching staff
- any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- transport to an activity outside school hours

(10) Remissions and concessions

In circumstances of:-

- (a) family hardship that make it difficult for pupils to take part in particular activities for which a charge is made
- (b) where parents are in receipt of the relevant benefits* or
- (c) where the pupil is entitled to Free School Meals

the school will invite parents to apply in confidence for the remission of the charges in part or in full.

Remissions under (a) will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Headteacher.

(11) Residential Trips

Where a school activity requires pupils to spend nights away from home the school will charge the full cost of board and lodgings.

Pupils whose parents can prove they receive the relevant benefits* are legally exempt from these charges and the Headteacher will inform all parents accordingly.

Additionally, the school will also remit these charges in part or in full for “looked after” children and those from families identified as being in need.

(12) Travel

If the trip is classified as being within school hours no charge will be made for travel costs (legal requirement), although a voluntary contribution may be sought.

Where the trip is classified as being outside of school hours (and is not for the purpose of an educational visit), a charge will be made for travel to cover the unit cost per pupil.

(13) Voluntary contributions

In certain circumstances parents may be invited to make a voluntary contribution towards activities for which the school cannot legally make a charge. Any request must make it clear that the contribution is voluntary.

The children of parents who choose not to contribute will not be treated differently from those who do. No pupil will be excluded from the activity if their parents do not contribute.

If an activity is dependent on a level of voluntary contributions this reliance will be explained to parents when the contribution is requested. If the activity has to be cancelled due to insufficient funds, all monies received will be returned to parents.

(14) Funding

Any shortfalls incurred by exemption of board & lodgings and remission of charges will be covered from the School’s Delegated Budget.

* Relevant benefits:

- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HMRC) does not exceed £16,190
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An Income Related Employment & Support Allowance (IRJSA).