

Charging and Remissions Policy

St Francis' Catholic Primary School



Approved by FGM on: May 2020

Committee Responsible Finance

Next review due by: May 2021

1. Aims and Rationale

St. Francis seeks to provide a broad and balanced education free for all pupils at the point of delivery. Each pupil is entitled to equality of opportunity in all spheres of their education. To provide enhancement of the curriculum, requests for voluntary contributions on a non-profit making basis may sometimes be made.

Our school aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made
- Clearly set out the types of activity where we will request a voluntary contribution to run an activity for the benefit of the children

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449-462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in maintained schools in England.

3. Definitions

- Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable
- Voluntary contribution: a voluntary fee payable for specifically defined activities which are not covered by clause 5

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The governing board

The governing board has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the head teacher.

The governing board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

4.2 The head teacher

The head teacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3 Staff

Our staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the head teacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The senior leadership team will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4 Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the head teacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where charges can be made

The school can charge for

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them; these might include cooking ingredients
- Costs associated with individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument whether in or out of school hours (unless it is provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum)
- Board, lodging and travel costs on residential visits
- Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)
- Activities which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours, and which are not required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or their religious education
- The cost of entering a pupil in public examination not prescribed in the regulations, and for preparing the pupil for such an examination outside of school hours
- Re-sits of prescribed public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school
- Occasions when an organisation other than the Local Authority or governing body arranges an activity to take place during school hours, and parents ask the school to grant their children leave of absence to join the activity. It can be possible to organise some activities for the school on this basis.
- Damage of school property or premises caused by pupil behaviour.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

In the event that a residential trip in its entirety costs less than the original calculation parents will be refunded for the excess (if the variance is £5 or greater per child). The excess funds will be evenly distributed per child attending the residential trip.

If the excess amount is less than £5 per child the funds will be retained and used to subsidise a future trip for the class.

6. Voluntary contributions

Other than activities that are subject to a charge (section 5), the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents for voluntary contributions include:

- School trips organized to enhance the statutory curriculum provision
- Travel costs to participate in sporting activities
- Costs of special events (theatre company visits, drama days, visiting specialists)

We ask new families to make a voluntary contribution of £24 as children start here at school and then request ~~voluntary Gift Aid Contributions of~~ (£20 per family on an ad hoc basis for special projects.) ~~optional~~

There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it may be cancelled.

In the event that a day trip/activity costs less than the original calculation, the excess balance will remain with the class to subsidise their next class trip.

Any balance remaining in Y6 will be used to subsidise one of the many Y6 trips in the summer term.

If the variance on an individual trip is significant (in excess of £2 per child) then the parents will be refunded through ParentPay for the excess. The excess funds will be evenly distributed per child attending the trip/activity.

7. Remissions

In some circumstances the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the head teacher/governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

7.1 Remissions for residential visits

Children who are in receipt of Free School Meals will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits.

Children in receipt of Pupil Premium will be offered assistance/exemption from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits.

7.2 Remissions for day trips/activities

Children who are in receipt of Free School Meals will be exempt from paying the cost of day trips/activities.

Children in receipt of Pupil Premium will be offered assistance/exemption from paying the cost of day trips/activities.

All exemptions will be treated confidentially.

9. Monitoring arrangements

The head teacher monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the governor's finance committee every year. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.