

ST. BEDE'S CATHOLIC JUNIOR SCHOOL

celebrates life and learning



CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

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St. Bede, patron of our school, wrote: “It was always my delight to learn and to teach”.

We are a celebrating community, living the Gospel values, committed to educating children in the light of the Catholic faith.

We journey together so that we “Might have life - life in all its fullness”.

John 10:10

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MISSION STATEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

It is a statutory requirement that Local Authorities (LAs) and Governing Bodies determine and keep under review their policy on charging and remissions within the framework of the legislation.

It is for individual governing bodies to determine their policy in relation to the LA's policy. The governing body's policy may be more or less generous than the LA's, as long as it meets the requirements of the law.

RATIONALE

Our Mission Statement endorses that we are “committed to educating children in the light of the Catholic Faith”.

This means that we are entrusted to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural, mental and physical development of the children in our care, and prepare them for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life. This is achieved through the ethos of our school, the curriculum and our response to the needs of pupils.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, trips and residential experiences can make towards pupils' personal and social education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities. The

Governors endorse the guiding principles contained in the Education Act 1996, in particular that no child should have his/her access to the curriculum limited by charges.

The Charging and Remissions Policy complies with statutory requirements, has regard to the Local Authority's Policy Statements on charging and is reviewed on an annual basis by the school Governing Body's Finance/Resources Committee.

LEGISLATION

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

It's also based on guidance from the DfE on statutory policies for schools and academy trusts.

The legislation:

- enables charges for education activities to be raised only in certain circumstances;
- enables voluntary contributions in support of any activity to be sought;
- requires a policy which, as a minimum, provides for complete remission of any charges otherwise payable in respect of board and lodging provided for a pupil on a residential trip where it takes place within specific criteria referred to in the legislation and where the pupil's parent(s) are in receipt of specified state benefits.

DEFINITIONS

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities

Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable.

PURPOSES

- To continue to maintain a Policy in accordance with legislation.
- To maintain the right to free school education.
- To endorse that activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time are available to all pupils regardless of their parents'/carers' ability or willingness to help meet the cost.
- To reinforce that there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education or related activity, but to give the school the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours.
- To confirm the right of the school to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school, or in support of any activity organised by the school whether during or outside school hours.

GUIDELINES

- The Governing Body will seek voluntary contributions in order to fund activities taking place wholly or mainly during school hours for which the costs cannot be met from the school's budget. It is made clear to parents'/carers', in writing, that any contribution is voluntary and failure to pay will not involve the relevant parent's/carer's child being treated differently from any other child in the school.

- Parents/carers are advised that where an activity cannot take place without some support from parents/carers, and there are insufficient voluntary contributions, the activity may be cancelled.
- For residential visits, which take place beyond the normal school day, payments are sought from parents/carers. **All residential trips are ‘booked’ on the proviso that when reserving a place, deposits will be lost should a child decide to withdraw from a trip and that parents/carers will be liable for the whole cost after a specific date which is shared with parents/carers at the time of booking.**

REMISSIONS

- On residential visits which are essential for delivery of the curriculum and which fall wholly or mainly in school time, there is a statutory entitlement to the remission of charges for board and lodgings. Any family in receipt of any of the benefits listed below is entitled to claim full remission:
 - Income Support (IS)
 - Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
 - Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - Child Tax Credit, where the parent/carer is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and whose annual income, as assessed by the Inland Revenue, does not exceed amount as set by the Inland Revenue
 - Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for four weeks after entitlement to Working Tax Credit ends)
 - Universal Credit
 - The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
 - Children who receive a qualifying benefit in their own right.
- It is at the Governing Body’s discretion to extend the Remissions Policy to cover other pupils whose circumstances warrant special consideration.
- The Governing Body is empowered to remit charges for activities or provide a subsidy to a pupil when costs can be reasonably and appropriately met from available funds in the school budget and/or the school’s private fund or from voluntary fundraising. The school continues to be responsible for meeting the cost of any remission of charges arising from this Policy.
- The School will ensure that they inform parents/carers on low income and in receipt of the benefits listed above of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits and trips.

CHARGING

We will charge for activities known as ‘optional extras’. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment.

The following are optional extras:

- **Education provided outside of school time** that is not part of:
 - The National Curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school

○ Religious Education

- **Examination entry fee(s)** if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- **Transport** (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- **Board and lodging** for a pupil on a residential visit
- **Extended day services** offered to pupils (such as school led breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra)
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra

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.

Moreover, parents/carers are asked to pay for:

Musical Instrument Tuition

- costs associated with individual instrumental tuition, whether in or out of school hours (unless this is provided as part of a syllabus for prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum), and with tuition for small groups of up to and including four pupils;

Public Examinations

- the cost of entering a pupil for public examination not prescribed in regulations (unless a Child in Care or disadvantaged pupil), and for preparing the pupil for such an examination outside school hours, for example, music examination.

Materials, Books, Instruments or Other Equipment

- costs for materials used in school where a parent/carer indicates in advance that they or the pupil wishes to own the finished article which incorporates the materials. Any charge will not exceed the cost of the materials. Alternatively, the parent/carer may be required to provide the materials in question.

Damage to Property

- costs of repairs or of replacing defaced, damaged or lost property where this is the result of a pupil's inappropriate behaviour or carelessness.
 - o Replaced library or book-banded books are charged at £5.00;
 - o Replaced pupil diary is charged at £2.00;
 - o Replaced school book, such as Homework or Sharing Learning is charged at £2.00.

With an 'optional extra' (such as an 'enrichment' trip such as to the theatre):

- parents/carers can choose whether their children attend or not;
- no profit can be included in any charges made – the charge is to be based on the actual cost of the activity;
- a charge will not include a share of the cost of any remissions. If further funds need to be raised, for example, to help in hardship cases, this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund-raising.

PUPIL PREMIUM

A variety of strategies are employed to tackle 'the opportunity gap' in education and to raise attainment for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. This includes the provision of extra-curricular activities, subsidised peripatetic music tuition and educational day and residential visits.

POLICY REVIEW

This Charges and Remissions Policy will be reviewed annually by the Finance/Resources Committee in the light of guidance, training and changes in legislation or at the request of a member of the school community. The staff and Governing Body will agree any amendments.

Version Control:

Reviewed with minor revision (addition of 'theatre trip' as an optional extra): January, 2025 FH