

St John's CE Primary

Charging and Remissions policy

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“Use your God-given gifts to serve others” 1 Peter 4:10

Ratified by governors: Autumn 2025

Mr D Ricketts (Chair of Governors)

Policy to be reviewed: Autumn 2026

All different, all equal, all growing together.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 St John's C.E. Primary School is committed to providing quality education based on equality of opportunity, access and outcome. In practice, this means the children have an entitlement to benefit from all educational activities and to:

- participate fully in the school curriculum
- contribute to all aspects of school life; and
- be a valued partner in the process of education

1.2 These objectives must be seen to inform educational activities, whether in or outside the school and are therefore integral to the process of charging for school activities and to the remission which is available to parent/guardians who are on a low income. We aim:

- to make school activities accessible to all children regardless of family income;
- to encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum;
- to provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school; and
- to respond to the wide variations in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.

1.3 The development of a range of activities forms part of the school's forward planning process and is linked to the annual budget cycles with a particular emphasis on the identification of specific resources to support such activities.

1.4 It includes a number of key factors:

- the value of certain activities in relation to age/needs of children;
- the cost of activity set against their educational value;
- how the activity will be paid for;
- the appropriate process for raising funding;
- an assessment of whether the educational aims can be met in any other way;
- an understanding of the various types of activities involved e.g. educational visits, music tuition, materials for practical work;
- reference to additional or hidden costs e.g. pocket money
- an assessment of local facilities.

2. LEGISLATION

2.1. Educational During School Hours

The DFE in its guidance to school governors' states that:

"... education provided during school hours must be free. The definition of "education" includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by the LA or the school to carry pupils between school and an activity."

It goes on to advise that

"... although schools cannot charge for school time activities, they may still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind) the essential point is that no pupil may be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind."

2.2 Education Outside School Hours

"Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or religious education. No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination. Charges may be made for other

activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The Education Reform Act 1988 described activities which can be charged for as "optional extras". It is up to the LA or governing body providing the activities to decide whether to make a charge".

2.3 Residential Activity

"For a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or essential to the education provided at the school, no charge may be made either for the education or the costs of travel. However, charges can be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for pupils whose parents are receiving Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance; Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; or Child Tax Credit (providing they do not also receive Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, assessed by HMRC, that does not exceed current guidelines). The Head Teacher and/or Deputy Head Teacher should tell all parents of the right to claim free activities if they are in receipt of these benefits".

All the relevant legislation is contained in the Educational Reform Act 1988, Sections 106-111, 117 and 118. Guidance is contained in the DES circular 2/89: Charges for School Activities.

3. **CHARGES**

The Board of trustees reserve the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school:

3.1 Residential experiences

The board and lodging element of residential experiences guaranteed for children of Y5/Y6 which will take place in school hours.

3.2 Activities outside school hours

The full cost to each child of activities deemed to be optional extras taking place outside school hours. Parents will be asked to sign a letter of agreement prior to the child joining in the activity.

The board of trustees may, from time to time, amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the board of trustees from inviting parents to make a contribution towards the cost of providing an educational activity for children.

4. **REMISSION POLICY**

4.1 To ensure that access to activities becomes a reality and that outcomes reflect intentions, St John's C.E. Primary School will implement the following Remission Policy. The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all children gain fully from everything the school is able to offer them and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. This policy takes into account the very real and persistent difficulties which people on low income have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their children. Birmingham City Council defines people in receipt of Income Support and their dependants as living in poverty and people in receipt of Housing Benefit and their dependants as living on the margins of poverty.

4.2 Teachers will ensure that children are not publicly identified and stigmatised.

5. **INFORMING PARENTS**

5.1 St John's C.E. Primary School will follow the DFE Guidelines which state that:

"The LA or governing body may not charge for anything unless it has drawn up a statement of General

Policy on Charging.... A policy statement will take account of each type of activity that can be charged for, and explain when charges will be made.... Parents need to know how the charges will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the costs (or even get it free). A summary of "this information" must be included in the prospectus published by the school"

"If a charge is made for each pupil, this should not exceed the actual costs. If further funds need to be raised this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund raising".

6. IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Planning, as part of the process of budget building is essential to developing a charging policy at St John's CE Primary School which recognises equality of access.

6.2 We will endeavour therefore to produce a programme of activities based on a clear set of priorities identified by the school and taking into consideration the projected number of children (including known remissions), cost per head and a breakdown of transportation costs, entry fees, discounts, teacher costs etc.

6.3 Such a process however, should not inhibit flexibility and the capacity of the school to take advantage of opportunities which arise in the course of the year. These will be implemented in a way which is consistent with the school's overall policy.

7 CHARGING POLICY

7.1 The policy of the Board of trustees of St John's CE Primary School concerning the requesting of contributions from parents for certain activities carried out during or out of school hours is as follows:

- contributions will be requested from parents to meet the cost of the following activities which are considered to enhance the learning opportunities of pupils:

a) Educational visits expenses such as, entrance fees, visiting theatre companies, performers who come into school, bus and train fares. etc. This will be payable in the following way;

Each visit will be charged for in advance of the visit taking place, if insufficient payments are received the visit will be cancelled and all payments reimbursed.

Those children eligible for free school meals won't be charged for educational visits.

b) Incidental costs incurred during educational visits such as the purchase of drinks and ice creams etc. again these visits offer many learning opportunities in which a child can integrate and socialise in the community.

c) Any activity that takes place out of school hours such as trips to the theatre, etc, and any incurred costs.

d) Board and lodging during residential educational visits

e) Incidental costs incurred during these residential educational visits such as entrance fees, transport costs, drinks, ice creams etc.

f) Any other approved educational activity not specified but falling into similar categories.

7.2 There is no obligation to contribute to such activities and no pupil will be discriminated against if parents are unable or unwilling to contribute. However, should an activity not be financially viable, it will not go ahead.

7.3 When applicable parents will be informed of their right to claim help with or remission of charges.

8 SUMMARY

8.1 The Board of trustees

- May not charge for any activities which take place in school time.
- Must draw up a charging policy, which does not have to be the same as the LA's policy as long as it meets the requirements of the law.
- May invite parents and others to make contributions towards any part of the school's work
- May charge for activities that are provided wholly or mainly outside school hours, as long as these activities are optional extras
- May charge for board and lodging on residential courses

9. **REVIEW**

- 9.1 The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed and discussed at the finance committee meeting in the **Autumn Term annually**.