



Remissions and Charging Policy

Loving God – Serving others – Flourishing together

RESPECT – ASPIRE – REJOICE

Approved by:

Full Governors

Date: 11 December 2024

Next review due by:

December 2026

“Encourage one another and build each other up.”

1 THESSALONIANS 5:11

VALUES

Our vision: ***“Loving God – Serving Others – Flourishing Together”*** and linked bible reference: *“Encourage one another and build each other up.”* 1 Thessalonians 5:11, are at the core of everything we do. They underpin our teaching and learning, and provide an environment which prepares our pupils as confident, happy citizens.

Our values: **Respect, Aspire** and **Rejoice** were chosen as verbs, as they are what our St. Mark’s Community **do** to support us living out our vision daily.

1. Introduction

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum with the exception of individual or group music tuition. We also may make a charge for expenses relating to educational visits.

2. Purpose

We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extracurricular) independent of their parents’/carers’ financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

3. Legalisation 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 England. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 The Governing Board

The Governing board has overall responsibility for approving the Charging and Remissions

but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

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

4.2 The Headteacher

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

4.3 School Staff

Our staff members are responsible for:

Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently.

Notifying the Headteacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies.

5. Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out **what the school cannot charge for:**

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

5.3 Residential visits

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
 - Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

6. Where charges can be made

Below we set out **what the school can charge for:**

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Optional extras (see section 6.2)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 6.3)
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school **and** the pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus

6.2 Optional extras

We are able to 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 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.

6.3 Music tuition

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

6.4 Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

7.0 Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents/carers to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. Sometimes the school pays additional costs in order to support the visit. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school provides this information on request.

The following is a list of additional activities organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. These activities are known as 'optional extras'. This list is not exhaustive:

- visits to museums or historical sites;
- sporting activities which require transport expenses;
- outdoor adventure activities;
- visits to the theatre or other arts;
- school trips abroad;
- musical events.

Each visit or activity will only take place if a significant amount of voluntary contributions are received to enable us to fund it. If contributions are low the trip may be cancelled at the Headteacher's discretion.

If the shortfall on voluntary contributions is so great that the visit or activity is cancelled, all monies collected will be returned.

If a child is unable to take up their place on a visit due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances, the school will where possible refund any payment made. This does not include non-refundable deposits for residential visits.

8. Residential visits

If the school organises a residential visit in school time or mainly school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, we make a charge for the education, travel expenses and board and lodging. Parents of children who are eligible for Free School Meals are exempt from payment for the board and lodging element of the cost.

9. Activities/items for which the school charges for

Charges for activities and events organised by the school may be requested for the following:

- After school clubs run by members of staff
- Ingredients and materials used in After School Clubs (e.g. Art club) when the parents express the desire to own the finished product;
- Visits which take place during the school day and beyond (e.g. theatre visits, field trips, residential visits);
- Visitors to come in the school (e.g. theatres, speakers)
- Activities which take place after school hours (e.g. sports tournaments, discos, concerts);
- Instrumental tuition provided by external providers
- Upkeep of the swimming pool

In cases of family hardship (e.g. where parents are in receipt of free school meals), the Governors may be prepared to meet all or part of the cost of visits and activities. Parents requiring such assistance should apply, in confidence, to the Headteacher.

For residential visits, families in receipt of free school meals will be entitled to a reduction equal to the board and lodging portion of the cost.

These visits and activities enhance and support the school's curriculum and we rely on our close partnership with parents to help us provide the best opportunities for the children in our care.

It should be noted that

- Parents are always informed before removing children from school premises for educational visits; and
- The school reserves the right to leave behind any child whose behaviour is a danger to him/herself or to others.

- The school reserves the right to go and collect a child from a school trip if they are behaving inappropriately or in a dangerous way.

11. Additional considerations:

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of visits and costs at the beginning of the school year so that parents/carers can plan ahead.
- We have established a system for parents/carers to pay in instalments.
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip.
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.

12. Charges for lost and damaged property

Children are taught to take good care of school property including library books which children can take home.

A nominal charge of £2.00 is made towards replacing the book should a library book be lost.

Similarly, parents are asked to make a donation towards any deliberate damage of school resources/premises. In the case of an insurance claim the maximum claim will be the excess paid for the insurance claim. Insurance companies may take action to reclaim their costs from parents.

13. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation:

The Resources Committee of the governing body will monitor the impact of this policy on a regular basis. It will seek to evaluate the impact of the school's extended services on those children most in need of additional support.

Premises Lettings

Premises lettings charges agreed by the Resources Committee are as follows:-

Swimming Pool	£50.00 per hour
Hall	£25.00 per hour
Classroom's & other rooms	£25.00 per hour
Playground	£20.00 per hour
Field	£20.00 per hour

All rates to increase by £5.00 per hour (plus any overtime payments) for holiday and weekend lettings, but in all cases the rates to be subject to the Headteacher's discretion, such discretion to be reported back to the Committee for monitoring purposes. Overtime:- after 6.00 p.m. and Saturdays: time and a half; Sundays: double time

14. Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for all children. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for this activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place.

The school does ask for a voluntary contribution towards the upkeep of the swimming pool.

15. School minibus

We may charge children if they are transported in the minibus to an extra-curricular activity. However, we use these charges only to cover the expenses of the trip, and not to make a profit.

The minibus may be hired out at a cost of £25 per day, plus replenishment of fuel used. Hirers must comply with the BCP Local Authority Minibus Operational Standards Guidelines.

16. At No More than Cost

The 'at cost' requirement applies to contracts for goods and services from a connected party exceeding £2,500, cumulatively, in any one financial year of the trust. For these purposes, where a contract takes the school's cumulative annual total with the connected party beyond £2,500, the element above £2,500 must be at no more than cost.

The school must be even-handed in relationships with connected parties, and ensure goods or services provided by individuals or organisations connected to the trust are provided at no more than cost beyond the limits specified.