

HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC SCHOOL



Charging & Remissions Policy October 2013

Introduction

The Governing Body of Holy Family Catholic School recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, trips and residential experiences can make towards students' all round educational experience and their personal and social development.

As a general rule, any activity or material which is needed as part of normal curricular activities does not incur a cost to parents (the term parent meaning a person having parental responsibility for a student). Where required the school reserves the right to charge parents in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1996.

1. Activities and Items for which the School Cannot Charge

The school cannot charge for:

- Education provided during normal school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- Education provided outside of school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- Tuition for students learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

2. Activities and Items for which the School may Charge

The school reserves the right to make a charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes them to own them;
- Optional extras (see below);
- Music and vocal tuition (see below).

Any charge made in respect of individual students may not exceed the actual cost of providing the additional, optional activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. It may not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. Furthermore, 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 students who do not wish to participate.

Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from the school accompanying students on a trip.

Participation in any additional, optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

2.1 Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as optional extras. Where an optional extra is provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment.

Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of school hours that is not:
 - a) Part of the National Curriculum;
 - b) Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school;
 - c) Part of religious education
- Transport that is not required to take the student to the school, or to other premises where the school have arranged for the student to be provided with education;
- Board and lodging for a student on a residential trip

In 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.
- Teaching staff (including supply teachers) or non-teaching staff purely providing the optional extra
- The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

2.2 Trips and residential visits

Where 50% or more of the time spent on activities and travel occurs during school hours (see appendix 1), a charge will be made for the board and lodging element of the experience. Payments to cover the costs relating to other aspects of the visit will also often be requested. Such contributions are voluntary, although unless sufficient voluntary contributions are received, the visit may not be allowed to proceed.

Where 50% or more of the time spent on activities and travel occurs outside school hours (see appendix 1), a charge will be made to cover the full cost to each student of all approved activities deemed to be optional extras including travel, board and lodging, materials and equipment, activities, entrance fees, teaching and support staff engaged in the trip or visit, and insurance.

2.3 Music and Vocal Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, specialist music lessons are an exception to this rule. Charges may be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, and the teaching is not an essential part of the National Curriculum. Lessons can be for either an individual student or groups of any size appropriate to the lesson and health and safety considerations. Parents will be charged £50 (September 2013) per term for any such tuition. Parents of a child who has been in receipt of free school meals at any point in the preceding six years, will be charged £10 per term. Where a child is in local authority care, this reduced rate will also apply.

2.4 Examinations

The school will charge for examination entries in the following circumstances:

- The school has not prepared students for the examination in the year for

which the entry has been made

- The examination is not on the set list but the school arranged for the student to take it
- A student has failed, for no acceptable reason, to complete the requirements of the examination course or attend the examination
- A student wishes to re-sit the examination or module for which the School has paid the initial fee. In this instance, the examination fee will be refunded in the event that the student's performance improves from the initial examination sitting. The refund is only applicable for one re-sit.

2.5 Work Experience Placements

The Governing Body recognises the value of work experience placements for students at Holy Family. All students in year 10 will be given this opportunity, for which a small charge will be requested. The cost of a work experience placement is approximately £80 (September 2013). Parents will be asked to contribute £30 (September 2013). A payment plan will be agreed with parents on request.

The cost of travelling expenses from home to a work experience placement will be the responsibility of the parent.

2.6 Acts of vandalism and negligence

The School will seek payment from parents for the cost of damage to school property caused wilfully or negligently by their child.

3. Remissions

Where the parent of a student is in receipt of qualifying state benefit, the Governing Body will remit in full the cost of board and lodging for any residential activity that is organised for the student and which takes place within school time. This will also be the case where the residential activity forms part of the syllabus for a public examination. A list of the (current) qualifying benefits is listed at appendix 2. As these change from time to time, clarification should be sought from the school when applying for remission.

The school may remit charges in full or in part to other parents after considering other specific hardship cases.

The school invites parents to apply in writing to the Head Teacher, in the strictest confidence, for the remission of charges in part or in full. The Head Teacher will authorise remission in consultation with the Chair of the Governing Body.

Remission will be given for students who have been in receipt of free school meals at any point in the preceding six years, or who are in local authority care, for activities including:

- Music tuition
- Following courses that lead to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award
- Work experience
- Other activities will be looked at on a case by case basis.

4. Voluntary Contributions to the 'School Fund'

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents to make voluntary contributions. Each family will be asked to contribute £50 (from September 2013) per year to the 'School Fund'.

Requests for these contributions shall clearly indicate that:

- There is no obligation to make any contribution.
- Students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made a contribution in response to the request.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed when there are changes in the law, or in accordance with the schedule drawn up by the Head Teacher and agreed by the Governing Body.

APPENDIX 1

Non-residential activities and visits

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during School hours, it is deemed to take place during School hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during School hours. School hours do not include the breaks during the day. Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during School hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require students to leave the school an hour before the day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Residential visits

If the number of school sessions taken up by the trip is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip, it is deemed to have taken place during School hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the School day, regulations require that the School day is divided into 2 sessions. A “half day” means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Example 1: Visit during School hours

Students are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 School sessions, so the trip is deemed to have taken place during School hours.

Example 2: Visit outside School hours

Students are away from School from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 School sessions, so the trip is deemed to have taken place outside School hours.

APPENDIX 2

Remissions

When the School informs parents about a forthcoming trip, they will make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits at the time of the trip will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and 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 the most recent limit notified by the DfE
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- An income related employment and support allowance

If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

Review Date Autumn term 2014