

Charging and Remissions Policy

At St George Catholic Voluntary Aided College we offer a broad and balanced curriculum aimed at meeting the needs of all our students, thereby ensuring that they enjoy their education and achieve their full potential. The Governing Body recognises that additional activities, beyond those specifically required by the curriculum, can make a valuable contribution towards students' wider education and should be provided wherever possible and affordable.

However, Governors have to be mindful of two particular responsibilities which constrain the provision of such additional activities.

- Their responsibility to use the College's limited financial resources to the maximum benefit of all the students in the school; and
- Their responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances.

Covering the cost of Activities

By law the College cannot charge for any educational activities/transport provided during College hours or for any such activities provided outside College hours if they are part of the national curriculum, or part of religious education. However, it is also likely that the College budget will not be able to completely fund the activity either. In these cases the College is allowed to ask for voluntary contributions to allow the activity to go ahead. Such activities may include amongst others:

- Travel for Educational Visits
- Finished products from art, craft and technology that are sent home to keep
- Board and Lodging on Residential Visits (* see note below)

The College will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the following state benefits.

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income Support
- Income based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit providing that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the prescribed income limit.
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Income related employment and support allowance.

Education partly during school hours

When determining whether an activity takes place during or partly outside school hours, the calculation shall be that if less than 50% of the time spent on the activity falls during school hours it will be deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example if the students leave College an hour before the College day ends but the activity does not end until late in the evening it is deemed to be outside College hours.

For residential trips, if the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours even if some activities take place in the evening.

Charges for Examinations

There is no charge for examinations that are part of the curriculum and on the College's set examination list, where children have been prepared for the examination by the College. However a fee may be charged to parents if:

- the examination is on the set list but the pupil was not prepared for it at the College;
- the examination is not on the set list but the College arranges for the student to take it;
- a student fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the Governing Body or Local Authority originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee;
- examination re-sits for which the College has earlier prepared the pupil but for which no additional preparation has been given.

Music Tuition

Legislation states that in general, all music education during school hours is free of charge, however instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule. The College may charge for teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given either to an individual pupil or groups of pupils. These charges may not exceed the cost of the provision. Charging may not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum or if the student is looked after by the local authority. (sec 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989)

Damage to property and breakages

Where school property has been wilfully damaged by an individual, the College may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of repair or replacement. Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a pupil and the College has been charged, the College may re-charge some or all of the cost to those responsible. Whether or not these charges will be made, will be decided by the Headteacher.

Voluntary Contributions

In order to pay for educational visits or other activities for which there is no College budget, parents will be asked to contribute to the costs on the clear understanding that:

- no child will be omitted from the activity by inability to contribute, but that;
- activities will not take place if adequate funds are not forthcoming.

If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit/activity and there is no funding available from any other source it is likely to be cancelled. However no child will be excluded from any activity simply because their parent/carer is unable to contribute. All children irrespective of parental contributions will be given an equal chance to go on any visit.

Financial Assistance

Where in the judgment of the Head of School, an educational opportunity might otherwise be denied to a student because their parent is unable to contribute to the cost and that child is not eligible for the pupil premium, then some financial assistance **may** be provided from College funds. This will be determined by the Headteacher. Where such assistance is agreed, parents will normally be expected to make some limited contribution towards the cost. Any parent wishing to take advantage of this assistance should contact the Headteacher who will deal with the matter in confidence.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Date of next review: March 2021

The Policy Working Group agreed this policy on 29 March 2019.