St John's Church of England Primary School

Charging and Remissions Policy

Gather, Grow, Go - The Parable of the Mustard Seed (Matthew 13: 31-32)

Date agreed and ratified by Governing Body: January 2026

This policy will be reviewed <u>at least</u> annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures.

1. Introduction

This policy is written in conjunction with the DFE guidance “Charging for school activities” and has been informed by A Guide to the Law for School Governors (Chapter 23). The purpose of the policy is to ensure that, during the school day, all children have full and free access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

2. Charging for education in maintained schools

Charging for educational activities in schools is covered by the Education Act 1996. The objectives behind the provisions are to maintain the right to free school education, to clarify the law and to maintain valuable optional provision.

The Governing Body cannot charge parents and pupils for any activity unless it has drawn up a charging policy. Moreover, when made, charges per pupil cannot exceed the actual costs incurred, which mean that pupils who can pay should not be charged extra to cover the costs of those who cannot afford to.

All activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity. It excludes charges made for teaching individual pupils or groups of up to four pupils to play a musical instrument.

3. Voluntary contributions

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day that entail additional costs, although these will be kept to a minimum and wherever possible be budgeted for from the main school budget.

In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents/carers cannot or will not contribute. Children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, this will be explained at the planning stage. An activity may be cancelled if not enough voluntary contributions are collected.

4. Music tuition

Music tuition is an exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil’s parents. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

Charging will not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum.

Charging will also not be made if the teaching is provided under the first access to the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.

5. Extended school fees

The school can charge for optional, extra activities provided mainly or wholly outside school hours as long as such activities are not an essential part of the National Curriculum or religious education. Activities which are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination must be provided free.

At the time of ratifying this policy, wraparound care is provided by an external company who set their fees independently of the school.

6. Residential visits

Charges will be made for board and lodging, except for pupils whose parents are in receipt of:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on
- Universal Credit

Voluntary contributions will be asked for to cover the cost of the coach travel and other activities during the trip.

7. Remissions

Parents in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

To request assistance, parents should contact the school office.