

THE FEDERATION OF ST JOSEPH'S JUNIOR, INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOLS



‘Together We Can, With Christ By Our Side’

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY (CROYDON)

Compliance statement

Every policy is reviewed at regular intervals and where applicable, as stipulated by law. Each policy is also available in additional formats including Braille and in additional languages upon request, within reasonable timescales as stipulated by the school.

The purpose of the policy is to make clear under what circumstances a charge will be

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made to parents. Unfortunately the law on this matter is complex and the rules about when a charge can be made are far from simple. In addition it is very important that the policy does not create a situation where fewer activities take place. The Governors have therefore tried to balance the need for a policy to be clear and accessible but also workable in the wide variety of circumstances that are met in school.

General Principle

In general, no charge will be made for any aspect of education, including books, materials and equipment, provided wholly or mainly during school hours. This will include visits out of school that are a requirement of the curriculum. However, a charge may be made for activities fitting the exceptions listed below:

Voluntary Contributions

Parents may be invited to contribute voluntarily for particular items, such as contributions to the School Fund account. The school can request donations for any purpose, but parents are not obliged to consent to requests. They are not in any way obliged to contribute, and the school has an obligation to make clear to parents that this is so. The school must also make clear that no pupil, whose parents do not make a contribution, will be treated differently on that account, or put at a disadvantage because of a parents' inability or unwillingness to make a contribution.

Equipment, Materials, Clothing

Equipment excludes clothing, including PE kit which must be provided by parents. A fee can be charged for (or parents required to supply) ingredients and materials in areas such as technology that are to be used by a pupil to produce his or her own article in a practical lesson. Any subject area can charge for materials, or require materials to be provided so long as:

- i.* The item will belong to the pupil.
- ii.* It can be taken away by the pupil.

Instrumental and Vocal Tuition

A charge may be made for instrument hire and instrumental tuition taking place either during or out of school hours. A charge may be made for instrumental music tuition for up to and including a group of 4 pupils unless the tuition is part of the requirements of the National Curriculum or the syllabus of a prescribed public examination, in which case it must be provided free of charge.

The pupil's parents must be informed beforehand and their agreement obtained before tuition is provided.

Breakages

A charge may be made for causing damage to school property, or damage resulting from vandalism, negligence or breaking school rules. This will be at the Headteacher's discretion.

Optional Extras (including School Visits)

Parents may be invited to make a voluntary contribution for an activity that takes place wholly in school time. As the activity is optional, parents have the right to choose whether their children should participate or not. Parents cannot be required to pay the charges for optional items; they must be willing to pay the charge. However, it must also be pointed out that the activity may not go ahead without voluntary contributions.

For example, if the school wishes to include the cost of providing supply cover for a teacher taking a school party on a visit that requires the group to leave before the end of a school day, the agreement of all the parents of the pupils participating in the visit must first be obtained. The contribution to the cost will then be a voluntary contribution.

Care needs to be taken when assessing the cost of the activity/visit as some would be unsustainable as they have low basic cost but potentially very high supply cost. In some cases, therefore supply costs or partial supply costs can be included, or if the activity/visit is deemed to be unsustainable if supply costs are included, then cover could be provided either in-house or there is a limited miscellaneous supply cover budget that can be drawn upon. In all cases, a statement of activity costs must be drawn up and submitted to finance staff at the outset.

The charge levied by the school cannot exceed the actual cost, of providing the optional extra, divided equally amongst those pupils willing to take part. Therefore, without consent of all the other parents, the charge cannot include an element of subsidy for any pupils who would like to take part in the activity but cannot, or will not, make a required contribution.

Educational activities such as after school clubs that take place wholly or mainly outside of school hours will be considered optional extras and as such may be charged for.

The cost of optional extras can include an appropriate element for:

- Travel
- Board and Lodging
- Materials, Books, instruments and other equipment
- Support Staff costs
- Entrance fees
- Insurance

The costs cannot include the costs of accompanying teaching staff, or teachers who have been involved in the organisation of the activity, unless engaged specifically to provide the activity (e.g. Tennis Coach).

Residential Visits

A charge can be made for the board and lodging costs of residential trips. The charge must not exceed the actual cost of providing board and lodging for that particular pupil. For example, if different nightly rates are applied by a hotel or hostel to the pupils of different ages, the total charge for the party should not be averaged out. Those for whom the charge is greater should pay the larger (correct) amount for them.

Activities partly during school hours

Many activities take place neither wholly inside, nor wholly outside school hours, but partly in both. In order to determine the classification the 50% rule is applied:

- Non-Residential activities: If 50% or more is spent on an activity in school time (includes travel time, excludes midday breaks) the whole activity is deemed to be inside school time.
- Residential activities: The number of half days are counted. A half day is any 12hr period ending noon or midnight. If the number of days and half days spent on the activity (including travel time) is greater than the number of school sessions (am and pm sessions) that a pupil would spend on a normal school day, the activity is deemed to take place outside school hours and vice versa.

Parents who have difficulty meeting the charges should discuss the matter in confidence with the Headteacher.

School Meals

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that the cost of school meals is paid in full so that an account is kept in credit. The school is not obligated to provide a meal for those pupils with School Meal accounts that are in arrears. Parents will have received a several communication reminders; telephone calls, text messages, emails or letters prior to this course of action.

St Joseph's Breakfast and After School Club

This facility is not managed by the school. Payment for childcare is the responsibility of the parent/carer and must be paid directly to the management of the club. Any queries regarding payment must also be directed to the club manager.

Pupil Premium Grant eligible pupils

The school may use Pupil Premium Grant funding to subsidise individual music lessons, after-school clubs, external school trips and extra curricula events for pupils who are

eligible for Pupil Premium Grant funding; subsequently these pupils are only requested to make up to a 50% parental contribution and are not prevented from participating in activities on the basis for financial limitations

Methods of charging

The school may use cashless school payment service facilities, such as ParentPay, to collect payments and contributions from parents / carers. Alternatively, parents may be invoiced for School Meal debts or asked to pay cash at the office for ad-hoc extracurricular activities and events.