



St Mary's
Catholic Primary School and Nursery

10.1a - CHARGING POLICY

Introduction:

The legislation maintains the right to free school education. We, as a school agree in principle to this.

Legislation requires that education should be free from charge if it:

- takes place in school sessions;
- is part of the National Curriculum or part of an agreed syllabus.

However there is a charge for individual or group music tuition if this is not part of the National Curriculum. Peripatetic teachers teach individual or small group lessons and charges are made for these lessons.

Swimming and Other Activities:

St Mary's organises swimming lessons for all children in Key Stage 2. They take place during school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make a charge to cover the travel costs for this activity and we inform parents when these lessons are to take place.

1. Definition of Charges

The legislation refers only to charges made by the LA, the school, or the governing body for "optional extras" (see point 2) outside of school hours.

An outside organisation may charge parents/pupils for activities, visits/services involving pupils from the school within school time. Parents would be under no obligation to receive these services but would be required to ask the school to grant their children leave of absence to join any activity requiring time away from school. Any teaching staff involved would have to be satisfied that any arrangements would secure the safety and welfare of the children.

Parents may also be invited to make "voluntary contributions" to meet the cost of providing an activity/visit. (see point 7).

2. Optional Extras

When organising activities, trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the trip. The participation of children in these "optional extras" depends solely on the basis of parental choice.

- If sufficient parents do not wish their children to participate in "optional activities", then the proposed activity need not take place.
- Before the optional activity can take place, parents must be asked, in advance, whether they agree to the activity and are willing to pay for it.
- Charges for individuals must not exceed the unit pupil cost of the activity.
- Charges will not include the cost of teachers at this school. Costs for specialised teachers, teaching for the duration of the activity and not employed by the LA or governors, can be included.

3. Residential Visits

If the school organises a residential visit in school time or mainly school time, we ask for contributions towards the cost of the visit. All visits are regularly evaluated in order to offer the best value for money. Parents who are in receipt of free school meals are entitled to a reduced amount which will be shared with those eligible.

4. Coaching Sessions

When the school offers additional coaching after school, for example football, judo etc. a qualified coach, who is not a member of the school staff, runs and organises these sessions. The body running the session make a small charge to cover their costs. Attendance is entirely voluntary.

5. Teacher Clubs

Our teachers give up their time voluntary to offer extra-curricular activities. A cost may be made to cover the additional materials, resources and refreshments

6. Remission of Charges

The Governing Body of St Mary's may propose to remit (wholly or partly) any charge which would otherwise be payable to them in accordance with our charging policy. For example, we may decide to provide an evening class as an optional extra. The governing body may decide to reduce the cost for those children whose parents / carers are in receipt of certain benefits.

7. Voluntary Contributions

The Act does not prohibit the school or LA from seeking voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or in respect of any school activity, whether during or outside of school hours, residential or non-residential.

It must be made clear that any contributions should be genuinely voluntary, that there is no obligation to contribute and that registered pupils will not be treated differently, according

to whether their parents have made a voluntary contribution or not. If we do not receive sufficient 'voluntary contributions', we may cancel a trip.

If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, then this must be made clear at the outset. It should also be made clear that the activity/visit would not take place if parents were reluctant to support it. The Act states that there is no restriction placed upon the use which can be made of such contributions or the level of contribution.

At St Mary's, we aim to include the following wording within our letter to parents/carers:

Dear Parent/Carer

We are proposing to take children from Class X to XX on (date). Whilst we would like to fund this visit ourselves, we do not have the resources to meet the total cost. Therefore, before the visit can take place, £XX must be raised to cover transport and admission for the X children in the class. This is an average of £X per child.

Would you please indicate on the return slip below whether or not you would be willing to make a contribution of £XX? Please note that if there is insufficient support for the proposed visit then, reluctantly, we shall have to cancel our provisional booking.

We shall notify you shortly if there is sufficient interest from parents for this proposed visit.

Yours faithfully,

To be returned to XX before (date)

*I *am willing/not willing (delete as appropriate) to make a voluntary contribution of £x for the proposed theatre visit on (date)*

Signed.....

Child's Name

8. Summary

- a. Should there be any deliberate and/or reckless damage caused by identifiable pupils, charges will be made.
- b. Charges will be made for any individual or group music tuition which is not part of the National Curriculum.
- c. Charges may be remitted for parents in receipt of certain benefits. In cases of hardship, any parents of pupils will also be exempted from all or part of any charges, at the discretion of the Head teacher.

- d. Where the school does not have the resources to provide activities/visits/services for the children, then parents will be asked to make voluntary contributions towards part or all of the cost of the activity/visit, etc.
- e. Third parties, i.e. school photographer, school book club, etc. will make a charge, provided parents of children are not under any obligation to receive the service/product, etc.

Reviewed and updated autumn 2015.