



# St Matthias School

## Charging and Remissions Policy

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Last Reviewed	12 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	
Review Cycle	Annual	
Author/Owner	Finance and Resources Committee	

### 1. Introduction

The Headteacher and Governing Body recognise the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend pupils' learning and to contribute to their personal development. The Headteacher and Governing Body aims to promote and provide such experiences for the pupils of the school, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities.

However, many of these activities have an associated cost and cannot be provided unless voluntary contributions are received or parents are charged for the cost. This policy will set out the circumstances in which charges will or will not be made for school activities and when charges may be waived in order to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit from school visits, curricular and extra-curricular activities.

### 2. Statement

The policy complies with the requirements of the Education Act 1996. Where 'parent' is referred to this will include adults with a responsibility for the pupil.

We aim:-

- To make school activities accessible to all pupils regardless of family income.
- To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum.
- To provide a process which allows activities to take place at a minimum cost to parents, pupils and the school.
- To respond to the wide variations in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.

### **3. Legislation – Education During School Hours**

The DfE in its guidance to School Governors states that “education provided during school hours must be free. The definition of “education” includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by school to carry pupils between the school and an activity.” It goes on to advise that “although schools cannot charge for school time activities, they still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind)”.

When additional costs are incurred by St Matthias School to enhance the curriculum opportunities for the pupils, parents may be requested to make voluntary contributions. However, no pupil will be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot or will not make a contribution of any kind.

### **4. Education Outside School Hours**

The DfE in its guidance to School Governors states that “parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or religious education. No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination. Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The Education Reform Act 1988 described activities, which can be charged for as “optional extras”.

### **5. Remissions**

To ensure that access to activities reflects intentions St Matthias School will implement the following Remissions Policy. The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils gain fully from everything that the school is able to offer them and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access. This policy takes into account the very real and persistent difficulties which people on low income have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their children.

Where parents are in receipt of Income Support, Income Based Jobseekers Allowance, Support under part IV of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999 or Child Tax Credit (provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received), the Governing Body will observe its statutory requirement to remit in full the cost of board and lodgings for any residential activity that the school organised for the pupil if the activity is deemed to take place within school hours.

There may be cases of family hardship which make it difficult for pupils to take part in other particular activities for which a charge is made. When arranging a chargeable activity the Governing Body will invite parents to apply in confidence for the remission of charges in part or in full. Authorisation of remission will be made by the Head Teacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors.

#### Data Protection of Pupils and Families

Teachers will ensure that these children are not publicly identified and stigmatised. This is particularly important as the fear of stigmatisation is often a key element in the non-take up of Free School Meals. This will be accomplished by developing methods of collecting voluntary charges or dinner money, which do not identify children who do not contribute.

## 6. Contributions

Voluntary contributions may be requested to help with providing activities even though they may be part of the normal school day or part of the National Curriculum. If voluntary contributions are requested for an activity it should be clearly understood that there is no obligation to contribute and that if the parent is unable or unwilling to pay, the child will not be excluded from the activity.

If sufficient contributions are not received the activity may be cancelled.

## 7. Charges

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge for the activities and items detailed below:

Residential Courses in school time (*see note below)	Parents are required to meet the full cost of the residential visit, except children with statements and children eligible for free school meals, where the cost may be supported from the School Fund account, by prior agreement with the Headteacher. If the income for each activity does not meet the overall cost, such activities may have to be cancelled.
Activities outside school hours not within the National Curriculum	Parents are required to meet the full cost, except children with statements and children eligible for free school meals, where the cost may be supported from the School Fund account, by prior agreement with the Headteacher. If the income for each activity does not meet the overall cost, such activities may have to be cancelled.
Individual Instrumental Music Tuition	Where the school provides an 'outside' tutor, parents will be charged for the tuition. 'Outside' tuition fees are reduced where parents receive a free school meals entitlement.
Breakfast club	The charge for this is £1.50 per day, or 70p from 8.30am (activities only - no breakfast). This charge is remitted in full for children in care or for families facing hardship - subject to the authorisation by the Headteacher.
Lost school equipment, books, etc	Parents may be requested to replace school equipment, books, etc. which have been lost by their child.
Breakages and damages to school buildings, furniture or property	Willful damage to school buildings or property by a pupil may be charged to parents by the school.

### \*Residential Visits

The DfE in its guidance to School Governors states that "For a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or essential to the education provided at the school, no charge may be made for either the education or the costs of the travel. However, charges will be made for board and lodging in these circumstances, except for pupils who are receiving Income Support or Family Credit. The Headteacher will

tell all parents of the right to claim free activities if they are in receipt of these benefits.” A voluntary contribution will be requested by the school for such activities.