

HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC SCHOOL



Charging and remissions policy

Date agreed	December 2020
Next review date	December 2021

THE MISSION STATEMENT OF THE SCHOOL

Holy Family Catholic School is a Catholic community embracing the clear Christian values of respect, service and justice.

We are a family of many cultures sharing one faith.

We exist to educate young people towards excellence in all dimensions of their lives, recognising the uniqueness of each and the equality of all.

Charging and Remissions Policy

Introduction

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities. This policy must be regularly reviewed.

The Governing Body of Holy Family Catholic School believes that all its students should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits independent of their parents/carers financial means.

This Charging and Remissions Policy describes how we will do our best, within our financial constraints, to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered. At the same time we will try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some students taking full advantage of these opportunities.

Charging

We will levy charges where the law allows us to do so but will offer limited financial assistance.

Voluntary Contributions

Separately from the matter of charging, schools may always seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experiences to students. All our requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that the pupils of parents/carers who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

The legislation states:

- If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions parents/carers will be notified of this from the outset.
- No student will be excluded from an activity solely because of their family's inability to pay.
- If insufficient contributions are raised, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.
- If a parent/carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their pupil will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

Education Outside School Hours

Charges will be made for activities that happen outside school hours, when these activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum or do not form part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education. This means that charges for activities that happen outside school hours, including holiday periods, which the law describes as 'optional extras' are permissible; for example, music tours and ski trips.

Parents/carers who wish their child to take part in 'optional extras' must pay the amount required by the school to cover the cost of the trip. This will be stated on the first letter proposing the trip.

Charging and Remissions Policy

Curriculum Related Trips including those which are Residential

If most of the time spent on either a residential or non-residential trip is during school hours or which meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination, or is part of the National Curriculum then the school will seek voluntary contribution as no charge can be made.

The exception is that a charge can be made for the residential element (board and lodging) of the educational trip.

If a student is registered for Free School Meals then a charge will not be made. Other families may apply for remission.

Musical Instrument Tuition

Charges may be made for teaching either an individual student, or groups of up to four, to play a musical instrument (including voice), if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student.

The School has agreed to fund music lessons with the Waltham Forest Music Service for 'pupil premium' students.

We will not make a charge for any musical tuition provided as part of the GCSE or GCE music curriculum. Families who have funded private music tuition for their pupils who opt to take music as an examination subject are asked to continue to do so.

Public Examinations

No charges will be made for entering students for public examinations that are set out in regulations. An examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

- the examination is on the set list, but the student was not prepared for it at the school;
- the examination is not on the set list but the school arranges for the student to take it;
- a student fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where we originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee; or
- parents/carers have decided that their pupil should re-sit an exam, whether or not they have received guidance from the school, and an exception has not been granted.

Charging and Remissions Policy

Books and Equipment

The school does not currently charge for textbooks but reserves the right to collect a deposit. It is expected that any text books or other equipment which are issued to students in relation to their studies will be returned in a state of good repair. Failure to return text books or equipment or the returning of such in an unusable condition will result in parents/carers being invoiced for the cost of purchasing a replacement.

Should a deposit have been paid which does not cover the cost of a replacement the school reserves the right to charge the difference.

Wilful Damage and Loss

Should any part of the school's estate be wilfully damaged the student's family will be liable for the cost of repair or replacement.

Financial Assistance

Families who claim Free Schools Meals (FSM) can make application to the Hardship Fund for assistance with the costs of a curriculum related trip, equipment, kit or public exam retake. The student must be registered for FSM with the school.

Other families may also make application to the Hardship Fund.

A qualifying criterion is attendance of at least 95% in the last full term of school (for students in Year 7, attendance of 95% or above since starting Holy Family Catholic School). Allowances will be made for certified medical absences.

The Headteacher will administer the Hardship Fund and seek the advice of the Chair of Governors as necessary. Applications for financial assistance should be made to the Headteacher.

The School administers a Post-16 Bursary Fund from a budget provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This is operated outside of this policy but guided by its principles.

Charging and Remissions Policy

Appendix 1

Non-residential Activities and Visits

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during the school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the breaks during the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside of school hours. For example if you leave the school an hour before the day ends but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Residential Visits

If the number of school sessions taken up by the trip is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting time and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. A "half day" means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day

Example 1: Visit During School Hours

Students are away from noon on Wednesday to 21:00 on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions so the trip is deemed to have taken place during school hours

Example 2: Visit Outside School Hours

Students are away from noon on Thursday to 21:00 on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions so the trip is deemed to have taken place outside school hours

Charging and Remissions Policy

Appendix 2

Remissions

When the school informs parents / carers about forthcoming trips, they will make it clear that parents / carers who can evidence they are in receipt of one of the following benefits at the time of the trip will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

Income support

Income based jobseekers allowance

Support under part VI I the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Child Tax Credit, providing that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HMRC) does not exceed the most recent limit notified by the DFE

The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit

An income related employment and support allowance

If a parent / carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit