

St Alban's C of E Academy

In Association with:
Manor Multi-Academy Trust



Charging Policy

Introduction.

The Head of School and the directors recognise the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend pupils' learning and to contribute to their personal development. The Head of School and the directors aim 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.

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.

Legislation – Educational 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 Alban's C of E Academy 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.

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'.

Remissions

To ensure that access to activities reflects intentions, St Alban's C of E Academy 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 the directors 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 The directors 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 of School in consultation with the directors.

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.

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.**

Charges:

The directors reserve the right to make a charge for the activities and items detailed below:

- Trips which are not part of the school curriculum or are outside the school day.
- After school and pre-school clubs.
- Damage to school property – the cost of replacing any item, such as a broken window or defaced, damaged or lost book, where this is a result of a pupil's behaviour.
- Visits to school by professionals e.g. authors, storytellers, musicians, dancers, artists etc.
- Damage to school books (Reading scheme).

Music Tuition

We do not charge to parents for individual tuition in playing any musical instrument.

Lost School Equipment, Books etc.

Parents will be expected to replace or pay for the cost of lost items of School property.

Breakages and Damage to School Buildings, Furniture or Property

Parents will be charged for damage caused as a result of a pupil's behaviour.

Residential Activity

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 a voluntary contribution will be requested by the school for such activities." St Alban's C of E Academy will follow the relevant legislation as contained in the Education Reform Act 1988: Section 106 – 111, 117, and 118. The guidance is contained in the DCSF circular 2/89: Charges for School Activities.

Photocopying

Any photocopying that is requested by parents relating to their child, under the 'Freedom of Information Act', will be charged at **10p per sheet and 20p for any colour printing.**

The directors may, from time to time, amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the directors from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for pupils.

Breakfast Club

These sessions are run daily. The breakfast club is run by school staff and Soccer 2000. There is a charge per day for the Soccer 2000 coaches, activities carried out and food supplied. The school makes no profit.

After School Clubs

These sessions are run throughout the week on various days. Every year group has access to extra curricular clubs. There is no charge for any of these clubs.

Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for pupils. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for this activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place.

School Procedures for Non-Payment of School Meals

The school has a procedure in place for school meals that have been provided, but not paid for. Reports are monitored from the SIMS system.

- Where meals are not paid for initially, parents are reminded verbally that they owe money for their child's lunch.
- If after two weeks, meals have not been paid for, a text message will be sent out to parents informing them of how much is outstanding and the need to pay. Parents are informed that if they are unable to pay, they should contact the school office.
- If the income due is not received, a letter will be generated from the SIMS system and sent out to parents. They are informed of what is outstanding and if required the school can provide information on the dates meals were provided, but not paid for. Letters are re-issued as reminders every two weeks if money is still not received.

Where parents have not paid for their children's lunches for a period of time, the school will investigate the reason for this and enquire whether the family is eligible to apply for free school meals (FSM). If this is the case, the application for FSM will not be backdated and the school will still need to pursue the outstanding debt.

- If the parent continues not to pay, the school must decide whether to write off the debt and stand the cost, or ask the LA to take legal proceedings against the parents.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by staff and directors.