



St. John's C. of E.

Blackpool's First Free School 1817

Charging & Remissions Policy

Last updated: April 2024

Governor approved: May 2024

Review date: April 2025

Purpose and Philosophy

At St. John's C.E. Primary School we regard each of the children in our care as special and unique individuals, indeed our mission statement highlights this fact:-

“Everyone matters in God’s World”

We recognise the entitlement of every child to have full access to a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum, irrespective of gender, race, colour, religion, particular needs or financial security.

We recognise that all statutory curricular provision during school hours should be free.

We recognise that there should be a wide range of extra-curricular activities which children should be able to access free of payment.

We also recognise that enhancements to curricular experiences (i.e. presentations / workshops in school, visits off site) should be offered if parental voluntary contributions supplemented, where possible and appropriate, by funding from the external sources, money raised by the PTFA or other fund raising activities, are sufficient to meet all costs.

This policy will have consideration for, and be compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) ‘Charging for school activities’
- DfE (2020) ‘Governance handbook’

Aims

We approach opportunities for our children with the view that

“In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you” so ensure that all experiences are available to all children.

We aim to ensure access for all children to a broad and balanced curriculum. Also to ensure that access to extra-curricular/enhanced curricular provision is made available to all children regardless of ability to make a financial contribution.

School trips & activities

When organising school trips or visits, which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, consideration is given to the value for money of the experiences and the potential for parents to afford the contribution required.

If it is decided the trip/visit should go ahead the full costs are divided between the numbers of children to be invited to take part. Parents are invited to make payment of this as a voluntary contribution. A decision is taken in advance as to the maximum funding available

to supplement parental contributions. If sufficient voluntary contributions are not made, then the trip/visit may be cancelled. If the trip/visit goes ahead it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution provided they have returned their permission slip.

Parents have a right to know how each trip/visit is to be funded. The school will provide this information on request.

School trip refunds

All deposits taken for the Year 6 residential visit will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that a school trip is cancelled or postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, the headteacher and School Business Manager will discuss the options with regards to the parental contributions received. These could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel their place on a trip or if a child is unable to attend a trip at short notice (e.g. due to illness), it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

Where a pupil or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school has the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits.

Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, the excess will be carried forward towards the cost of future class trips or activities.

The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally.

Excess expenditure will be subsidised from the school's Managers Account.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy

Residential Visits

Each year a residential visit for Year 6 pupils is arranged to give them the opportunity to take part in adventure and essential life skills activities. On occasion, we may also arrange brief residential visits for our Year 5 pupils in order for them to immerse themselves in one of the topics covered during the year.

Parents will be asked to pay the cost of board and lodgings for the trip subject to remissions detailed below. School will apply for and make full use of any funding or grants available and any monies received from external agencies / sources will be applied in full to the cost of the trip/visit thus reducing the overall cost to parents.

In the case of hardship school may reduce the cost to a family, supplementing the parental contribution from the school's delegated budget. Families in receipt of specified benefits (see appendix) will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodgings. They will, however, be invited to contribute towards the additional costs of the visit. Arrangements are put in place to support parents in meeting the costs of this visit (instalments). This visit is not compulsory.

Children who do not go on the residential visit are offered a range of activities to enhance the curriculum within school time.

Music Tuition

Since music is part of the National Curriculum, charges are not made for class/group musical activities provided to meet statutory requirements. Charges are not made for involvement in the school choir or extra curricular music tuition undertaken by members of staff. In line with Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007, a standard charge will be made for peripatetic lessons which will be supplemented by the school's delegated budget and may be waived in the case of hardship.

Charging will also not be made if the teaching is provided under the first access to the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.

Sporting – Extra-curricular provision

No charge is made for extra-curricular sporting provision e.g. football training; bids are made whenever possible to fund these activities, alternately the provision is funded from the school's budget.

Materials/resources

Parents are not asked to contribute to the costs of materials/equipment e.g. ingredients for baking. (DfE Circular 2/89 paragraphs 15-17). All costs for such activities are met either by the school's delegated budget or if appropriate from the School Managers Account.

Parents are asked for a nominal payment if reading books are lost or damaged beyond use. Once again this may be waived in the case of hardship. If a 'lost' book is subsequently found and returned to school, then the payment may be refunded to parents. No child will be prevented from having a reading book because of parental refusal to meet the cost of lost or damaged books.

Lettings

Where school facilities are made available to outside users, this will be at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. A scale of charges for such activities is determined by the Governing Board and forms part of our separate Lettings Policy.

Remissions Policy

Those parents in receipt of one or more certain benefits (see appendix) may be offered assistance in paying for the activity or visit or a longer period of instalments will be made available to enable their child to access the activity.

School trip refunds

All initial deposits for residential school visits will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded.

In the event that a parent cancels their child's place on a trip, it will be at school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. We will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it will be at school's discretion as to whether a refund is given.

In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it will be at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. Options to be considered will include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

School will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally. Should a parent wish to make a complaint about refunds, they will be able to do so via the School Complaints Policy.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring and evaluation is carried out to review the effectiveness of this policy in enhancing the curricular and extra curricular provision within our school. Monitoring takes place in a number of ways:

- ◆ personal evaluation of charges made and payments received from trips/visits by the class teachers, shared with the Head teacher;
- ◆ discussion with individuals or groups of children as to the effectiveness of extra and enhanced curricular experiences;
- ◆ discussion with members of staff as to the effectiveness of the policy.

Appendix

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided parents are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if parents apply on or after 1st April 2018 their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)