

St Thomas and St Anne's CE Primary School

Policy for Charging and Remissions

2024-2025

Updated September 2024



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In general, no charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it should be free. Is it therefore possible to levy a compulsory charge for transport or admission costs for swimming lessons or for visits to museums, etc. during school hours.

The Local Authority or governing body may not charge for anything unless they have drawn up a statement of general policy on charging. The governing body's policy may be more or less generous than the LAs, as long as it meets the requirements of the law.

Voluntary contributions

Head teachers of governing bodies may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- Any activity which takes place during school hours
- School equipment
- School funds generally

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, though, and pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute may not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it must be cancelled.

Residential Trips

The school may charge for board and lodging, but the charge will not exceed the actual cost. Parents will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they 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 four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

The school will provide a form for parents to submit and provide proof of receipt of one of the above benefit payments in order to be eligible for the exemption.

A similar entitlement applies where the trip takes place outside of school hours, but it is necessary as part of the National Curriculum, forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination that the school is preparing the pupil to sit, or the syllabus for religious education.

Instrumental Music Lessons

A charge may be made for instrumental music tuition for up to and including four pupils, unless the tuition forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination (e.g. GCSE), that the school is preparing the child to sit, or is part of the National Curriculum or the syllabus for religious education, in which case a charge is not permissible.

Public Examinations

No charges may be made for entering pupils for public examinations that are set out in regulations. However, an examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

- The examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at the school
- The examination is not on the set list, but the school arranges for the pupil to take it
- A pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing body or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee
- The examination is a resit where no further preparation has been provided by the school

Charges may not be made for any cost associated with preparing a pupil for an examination. However, charging is allowed for tuition and other costs if a pupil is prepared outside school hours for an examination that is not set out in regulations.

Damaged or lost items

The school may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents. Parents will only be charged the replacement cost to purchase the same or equivalent item. The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

Legislation

Provisions concerning charging for school activities can be found in sections 402, 450 to 458 and 460 of the **Education Act 1996** and in **The Education (School Session and Charges and Remissions Policy) (Information) (England) Regulations 1999**.

Key Documents

Further detail can be found in **A guide to the Law for School Governors.**