

St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School

Charging & Remissions Policy



All members of our community are given equal opportunities in line with the Disability Equality Scheme (D.E.S.)

Date reviewed: September 2023

Date of next review: September 2024

RATIONALE

The Governing Body of each school within the Roman Catholic Family of Schools (RCFS) in North Tyneside are committed to the general principle of free school education. It recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities, including school visits, residential experiences and clubs, can make towards all aspects of a student's education. In principle:

During the school day within all schools forming the RCFS in North Tyneside, all activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity. It excludes charges made for teaching an individual pupil or groups to play a musical instrument. Unless the teaching is an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), we will make a charge. (See below)

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs, these include some field trips or specific educational visits or from time to time we may invite a non-school based organisation such as a visiting drama group or storyteller to arrange an activity during the school day. In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. If any school within the RCFS decides that insufficient funds are available to go ahead with such a curriculum extension event, it maybe necessary to curtail or cancel the activity. This will be at the discretion of the individual head teacher of the school.

Calculating charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who can't or won't. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising. The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

Residential Activities Held During School Hours

Charges may be made for the board and lodging and travel element of those residential activities which take place during school hours.

Swimming

All primary schools within the RCFS organise swimming lessons for all children during their time in Key Stage 2. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We therefore make no charge for this activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place, and we may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the costs of transport to and from these lessons.

Classroom materials and charging in kind

No charge will be made for materials and equipment. The cost of ingredients, materials, equipment, etc. needed for practical subjects is budgeted for and borne by the school. Parents who are willing to contribute in cash or kind may be invited to do so on a voluntary basis. If a child or parent wants to own any finished artefact then the school will work out a nominal charge for this.

Activities Held Out of School Hours

These will sometimes include day and residential experiences. This also includes any charge for part of the school's extra-curricular activities run by either school staff or external providers. Charges may be made for these activities except where they are provided to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum.

Examination Fees

While this may mainly apply to St. Thomas More Academy this could also apply for some language and music examinations taken in primary schools within the RCFS. There will be no charge for any activity that is an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination unless:

- the examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it at this school
- the examination is not on the set list but we arrange for the pupil to take it
- the student has failed without good reason to meet any examination requirement for the syllabus.

“Examination requirement” in this context is defined by s462 of the 1996 Act. It means a requirement of a student must meet in order to qualify for assessment for the purposes of determining his/her achievements in that exam in that syllabus; for example, a failure to hand in coursework that is a requirement for the assessment of that exam. This includes exam re-sits.

Voluntary Contributions

The Governing Body may invite parents to provide voluntary contributions in support of any school activity, whether during or outside school hours.

Breakage and Damage to School Property

The Governing Body reserves the right to request payment from parents where their children have caused breakages or damage to school property where this is as a result of the student's behaviour.

Lettings

The Governing Body reserves the right to let internal and external areas of the school for community and public use. The lettings fees charged will at a minimum reflect any expenses incurred for running and staffing costs.

Additional considerations

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- all trips will be published at least one month in advance.
- we have established a system for parents to pay in instalments
- when an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- we acknowledge that offering opportunities on a “first pay, first served” basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.

REMISSIONS

Where the parents of a pupil are in receipt of income support, jobseeker’s allowance, disabled person’s tax credit or working families tax credit, the school will offer to remit in full or part the cost of full board and lodging for any residential activity which is deemed to take place in school hours or where it forms part of the syllabus for the National Curriculum.

The school may wish to remit in full or in part the cost of other activities for particular groups of parents, for example, in the case of family hardship. When arranging a chargeable activity, such parents will be invited in confidence for the remission of charges in full or in part.

Authorisation for such remission will be made by the Head teacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed by the RCFS Committee and then individual schools every two years.