

St Alban's Catholic High School



Charging Policy

Approved by Full Governing Body on: 3rd December 2018

Next Review Date: December 2019

Infrastructure Committee Approved 19th November 2018

INTRODUCTION

The Governing Body endorses the guiding principles of the 1988 Education Reform Act, especially that no child should have their access to the formal curriculum limited by charges.

The Governing Body also recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, including clubs, educational visits and residential experiences can make towards a pupil's personal and social education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the students of the Academy and as additional optional activities, whilst recognising the financial constraints under which the Academy operates.

AIMS

- To make a broad programme of trips and activities accessible to as many students as possible.
- To establish and maintain a fair and coherent system of charges within the constraints of the annual budget.

PRACTICE

1. Charges will not be made for any activities that form part of a prescribed examination syllabus or are in fulfilment of National Curriculum requirements.
2. Other activities that occur wholly or mainly within school hours will not normally be subject to a charge. However :-
 - The position concerning charging for instrumental music tuition is set out below.
 - In practical subjects, parents may be asked to pay for the full or partial cost of materials or ingredients if they have indicated in advance that they wish to own the finished product.
 - Voluntary contributions may be invited for external trips that take place mainly within school hours. No child will be excluded because of inability to pay but the Academy is entitled to cancel the trip if the level of contributions does not meet its budgetary requirements.
 - Activity Days trips will be offered to students on a menu basis with a broad range of costs intended to be within the scope of most family incomes. Students are expected, therefore, to only participate in activities that are affordable and the Academy will not support students who sign up for activities they cannot afford.
 - To alleviate any financial burden all trip payments can be made in instalments via the Finance Office.
 - Board, lodging and travel costs may be charged on residential trips, subject to statutory exceptions.
3. Trips and activities that take place mainly out of school hours will be chargeable.
4. The costs of examination entries for subjects taught within school will normally be met by the Academy where the candidate meets the Academy's entry criteria. In the case of candidates failing to meet the entry criteria, but whose parents still wishes them to be entered, they may be asked to pay the relevant fees. The Academy will normally refund those fees where a candidate achieves satisfactory grades in the subject(s) concerned.

5. The cost of the examination entry fee will be charged to parents if a pupil fails to attend an exam.

CHARGES

In cases where charges are to be levied, parents will be advised in advance and monies collected prior to the activity. Requests for help from parents on income support or family credit will be considered and assistance provided within the limits of the Academy's Budget. Complete confidence will be observed in such matters.

The charge to be levied will be calculated in advance on an anticipated per capita basis taking into account any direct costs (e.g. travel expenses and entry fees) and indirect costs (e.g. the costs relating to persons accompanying the students). The costs of any insurance deemed appropriate and the cost of cover for the staff members accompanying the students will also be included.

The Academy believes it is very important to open activities as far as reasonably possible to all students, regardless of their capabilities. In some instances this would require special arrangements to be made and these would incur additional charges over and above those which would ordinarily be incurred. In recognition of this being a "whole school" responsibility, and to avoid the costs of a particular trip being disproportionate, these extra costs will not normally be built into the calculation. Instead, to support the additional costs of inclusion, the voluntary calculation invited from parents for all trips will include a levy of 1%.

Following completion of the trip or activity, a calculation of the actual charges to each student will be made. Insofar as a student has paid more than this, the surplus money collected in excess of £5 per student for each trip or activity will be returned to the parents/carers.

Any surplus less than £5 will be accumulated and used to support students with financial difficulties on future trips or activities.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC TUITION

A charge may not be levied where the tuition is provided as part of a recognised external examination course within the Academy's curriculum.

Current legislation allows students to be charged for instrumental music tuition as long as a teaching group does not exceed four students. The Governing Body reserves the right to charge parents/carers for all or part of the cost of providing such tuition and/or the use of instruments.

Charges for instrumental tuition will be reviewed annually and parents/carers informed.

STUDENT PRINTING

Each year students will be allocated printing credits covering specific curriculum requirements for printed coursework. If students exceed their allocation they are required to purchase additional credits for any additional printing they wish to do. Printing credits are charged at cost.

REMISSIONS

Where a student is in receipt of, or registered for, free school meals, the nationally agreed criteria for which are where a student's family is in receipt of:

- Income Support;
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit only, no Working Tax Credit and an annual income that does not exceed £16,105;
- Supported under Part VI of the Immigrations and Asylum Act 1999
- Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after your employment finishes or after you start to work fewer hours per week.

or in other exceptional cases not falling within the criteria listed above, the Governing Body will remit in full the cost of board and lodging for any residential activity that it organises for the student (if the activity is deemed to take place within the school hours or where it forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or the National Curriculum).

It is recognised that there may be cases of family hardship which make it difficult for students to take part in particular activities for which a charge is made. In such cases, the Governing Body invites parents/carers to apply, in confidence, for the remission of charges in part or in full. Where appropriate, the Principal will authorise remission in consultation with Chair of Governors.

GENERAL

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

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governing Body from inviting parents/carers to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for students.

Signed by D. Verney, Chair of Governors:

Date:
