

**SAINT JOHN HOUGHTON CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY (“The School”)
CHARGING and REMISSIONS POLICY**

Date of Next Review: April 2018

BACKGROUND

1. The Local Governing Body is required by Law to have a statement of general policy on charging and remissions that takes account of each type of activity that can be charged for, and explains when charges will be made and when charges will be remitted. This policy has been drawn up in accordance with Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 (The Act) and Regulations 1999: SI 1999/2255 which sets out the law on charging for school activities. The policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body annually.

THE SCHOOL DAY

2. The Act distinguishes between education during school hours and education outside of school hours in defining how and when charges can be made.

School Hours are defined as the times when the school is in session, and do not include the break in the middle of the day:

Morning Session 8.45am – 12.30pm

Afternoon Session 1.15pm – 3.15pm

ADMISSION

3. No charge will be made for admitting students to the school.

EDUCATION DURING SCHOOL HOURS

4. Education provided during school hours will be free of charge. This includes materials, equipment, and transport provided in school hours by the Local Authority (LA) or by the school to carry students between the school and an activity. It also includes activities taking place during the school day, such as visiting theatre companies or day trips for students. Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours then the principles set out in para 8 will apply in determining the charging basis.

The following are exceptions to this principle and charges will be made for:

(a) Musical Instrument Tuition during school hours

There is an exception to the rule about not charging for activities in school hours. Charges may be made for teaching either an individual student, or groups of up to four, to play a musical instrument, if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student. The charge made for this activity will be the actual charge of the activity and will vary according to the instrument being taught. Parents will be notified in advance of the charge made for each lesson. The charges for these lessons will be set down in a contract between the private music teacher and the parent. The school itself will not charge for this activity.

(b) Activities during school hours not run by the school or the LA

When an organisation acting independently of a school or LA arranges an activity to take place during school hours and parents want their children to join the activity, such organisations may charge parents. Parents must then ask the school to agree to their children being absent, just as

they would if they wanted to take their children out of school for a family holiday. However, where an activity is organised by a third party, and is approved by the school, is educational or is supervised by someone authorised by the school, then it is the Government's view that it should be treated as if it were provided by the school, and so no charge will be made to the parents, or students. Such an activity, if it takes place outside the school premises, is an 'approved educational activity' within the meaning of Regulation 4A (a) of the Education (Student Registration) Regulations 1995 (as amended).

EDUCATION OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS

5. The School will charge parents for activities that take place outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum or do not form part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education. These are described as 'optional extras' under The Education Act 1996.

RESIDENTIAL VISITS DURING SCHOOL TIME

6. The school will charge for board and lodging. Other costs such as transport to and from the venue, activities and events held as part of the residential will be funded through voluntary contributions. The costs of providing supply cover for staff accompanying students on a residential will be funded through voluntary contributions.

RESIDENTIAL VISITS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL TIME INCLUDING IN SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

7. The school will charge for board and lodging, transport costs and any activity or event held as part of the residential.

EDUCATION OR ACTIVITY PARTLY DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Non-residential Activities

8. If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

Residential Activities

9. If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some of the activities take place late in the evening)

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

10. Although there will be no charge for activities taking place during school hours, the school will invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind) to make school funds go further. Voluntary contributions may be requested at any time towards the cost of any activity or as a donation. All requests to parents for voluntary contributions will make it quite clear that the contributions are voluntary and may include contributions towards the indirect costs and administrative costs of providing the activity or service. The school will make it clear that children of parents who do not contribute voluntarily will not be treated differently from children of parents who do make voluntary contributions and that **the child will not be excluded from the activity if a contribution is not made**. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents, then that will be explained to parents in writing at the planning stage. Where there are insufficient voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then the activity will be cancelled.

OTHER CHARGES

11. The School may make charges for the following:

(a) Public Examinations

No charges will be made for entering students for public examinations that are set out in regulations and where the school has prepared that student through the syllabus. However, an examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

- the examination is on the set list, but the student was not prepared for it at the school;
- the examination is not on the set list but the school arranges for the student to take it;
- a student 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; this includes failure to attend for an examination without good reason.

(b) Transport – School Minibus

Under Section 19 of the Transport Act 1985 and in accordance with the provisions of the Minibus and Other Section 19 Permit Buses Regulations 1987, the school may make a charge, where applicable for use of the school minibus. The Section 19 Bus Permit specifies that students of any school, college, university or other educational establishment and staff or other helpers accompanying them may be carried as passengers. A charge will be made on a per kilometre basis and the per kilometre rate will be determined by the Local Governing Body annually.

(c) Transport – School Buses

If The School provides a bus service for home to school transport the charges for such a service will be set to recover the costs (including indirect costs) of providing the service and will be determined by the number of students travelling on the bus. Parents will be informed of the charge at the start of each term and payment will be in advance for that term.

(d) Lettings of Facilities

The school will from time to time allow other groups to use school premises. Charges for use of school premises are set at the start of each financial year.

PENALTY CHARGES

12. The School may make charges for the following:

(a) Unauthorised Absence

The School in collaboration with the Local Authority or Police will issue Penalty Notices for non-attendance at school. The circumstances in which Penalty Notices will be issued are set out in the school's Attendance Policy and the amount of the Penalty Charge will be as applicable at the time of issue.

(b) Damage to or loss of Property or Equipment

Where a student has lost or caused damage to property or equipment belonging to the school or to another student through deliberate misuse or vandalism then the school will charge parents for repairing or replacing the equipment. In collaboration with the school transport providers, the school will also charge parents for any wilful damage caused to school buses by students.

REMISSION OF CHARGES

13. Parents, or the young person themselves, who are in receipt of any of the following benefits (the eligibility criteria for free school meals) will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential activities taking place during school hours:

- 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 Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're 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

Note: Working Tax Credit is not included as a qualifying benefit..

14. Letters will be sent to parents at the planning stage of a visit to make it clear that those qualifying under paragraph 13 above will be exempt from the charges relating to board and lodgings for residential activities taking place during school hours.

15. The school will meet the costs of board and lodgings for those children exempt. When trips or activities taking place during school time are oversubscribed then the process for selecting children to take part will be fair and open and those who are exempt from charges will not be disadvantaged. Ability to pay will not be a factor in selecting children to take part.

16. Charges to parents will not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity and will not include additional amounts to subsidise the event or other students. However, voluntary contributions will be sought at any time towards the costs of the activity and these will be used to ensure that the activity can proceed. In the event of excess charges being made, parents will be refunded. However, voluntary contributions will be retained by the school.

SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENTS FOR SAINT JOHN HOUGHTON CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

17. Appendix 1 illustrates how the school will charge for the range of activities typically taking place during a school year.

18. As part of the distinctive Catholic ethos of the school, the Local Governing Body wishes to make available to every child the opportunity to take part in at least one Briars Retreat during their time at school. Although not obliged to do so the school may offer support to families towards meeting the costs of these retreats. Parents experiencing financial difficulties not already covered under the remissions section of this policy will be advised to contact The Deputy Headteacher, Mrs S Doczymbinska, who will review the circumstances. Decisions on financial support will be made on a case by case basis.

APPENDIX 1

Event/Activity	Cost Type	Charge YES/NO	Voluntary Contribution YES/NO	Remission of charges where applicable
Residential activities (during school week), eg Briars, Activity Week	Board & lodging Transport, Activities and indirect costs	YES NO	n/a YES	YES n/a
Residential activities (out of school week, holidays, weekends), eg Briars, Ski Trip	Board & lodging Transport, Activities and indirect costs	YES YES	n/a n/a	NO NO <i>See para 18</i>
Non-residential trips or other visits during school hours, eg Space Centre, Mission to Mars, Film Visits	Transport, Activities, entrance fees and indirect costs	NO	YES	n/a
Non-residential trips or other visits outside or largely outside school hours not part of the national curriculum	Transport, Activities, entrance fees and indirect costs	YES	n/a	NO
Non-residential trips or other visits outside or largely outside school hours and part of the national curriculum	Transport, Activities, entrance fees and indirect costs	NO	YES	n/a
Non-uniform day, fast day	Non-uniform Sandwich fast day meal	NO YES	YES n/a	n/a YES
Sports Coaches/activities (during the school week)	For example, Aerobics, Zumba, fitness, rugby	NO	YES	n/a