



CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY (including Extended Services)

Written by: Finance Committee

Adopted by the Governing Body: Spring Term 2012

To be reviewed: Annually

Last Reviewed: Summer Term 2016

Next review: Summer Term 2017

Except in the case of **dismissal the term 'Head teacher' refers to the Executive Head and the 'Heads of School. The power to dismiss is vested in the Executive Head teacher.*

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1 Introduction

St Margarets C of E Primary Schools are Christian communities. We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimize the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

This policy has been informed by the Local Authority's guidance on: *Developing a Charging Policy for Extended Services*.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those items/activities which the school will provide free of charge, those for which the school will make a charge, and those where charges may be waived.

1.2 Definition of the School Day

The school day is defined as: 8.45am to 3.00pm (excluding the midday break). The midday break does not form part of the school day. This starts at 12.15 pm for the Reception class and Years 1 and 2, and starts at 12.30 pm for Years 3 to 6. This ends at 1.30 pm.

1.3 Responsibilities

The head teacher will ensure that all staff are familiar with and correctly apply the policy.
The governors will review the policy annually as part of the annual budget setting cycle.

2. Activities for Which No Charges Will Be Made

During the school day all education or activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum or the school's curriculum for religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment, and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity.

Education provided outside of the school day will be provided free of charge if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of the school's curriculum for religious education.

2.1 Swimming Lessons

The school organizes swimming lessons for each class at some point during their time at the school. These take place within the school day and are part of the National Curriculum. We therefore make no charge for this activity. We do however inform parents when these lessons are to take place, we ask parents for their written permission for their child to take part in these lessons, and we do seek voluntary contributions towards meeting the costs of providing these lessons (see 3 below).

3. Voluntary Contributions

When organizing school trips, visits or activities which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school may always seek voluntary contributions towards the cost of these trips and activities in order to offer the widest possible variety of experiences to pupils.

All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasize their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

The Law states that:

- If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the parents will be notified of this from the outset.
- No child will be excluded from an activity because parents are unable to pay.
- If insufficient contributions are raised, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.
- If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

Therefore, if insufficient funds are available within the school's delegated budget and the school does not receive sufficient voluntary contributions from parents it may be necessary to curtail or cancel the planned activity.

If the activity goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

Parents have the right to know how each trip is funded. The school will provide this information on request.

The following, non-exhaustive list, gives examples of types of additional activities which may be organized by the school within the school day and for which the school may request voluntary contributions from parents:

- Visits to museums for which there is an entrance fee; transportation or workshop costs.
- Sporting activities, which require transport expenses.
- Outdoor adventure activities.
- Visits to the theatre.
- Musical events.
- Visiting drama groups.
- Visiting storytellers.

4. Activities for Which Charges May Be Made

4.1 Activities Outside School Hours

Charges may be made for non-residential activities, which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours). When such activities are arranged parents will be told how the charges were calculated.

4.2 Residential Activities

For residential trips deemed to take place during school time no charges may be made for any part of the trip other than for the board and lodging costs of that trip. However, pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see 7 'Remissions' below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs in those circumstances. In such circumstances, the school may request financial support in meeting the actual cost per eligible pupil, from the Governors' School Appeal fund, on behalf of those pupils whose parents are in receipt of such benefits. The granting of such support will be at the discretion of the Appeal Fund Trustees.

4.3 Music tuition

All children study music as part of the National Curriculum. We do not charge for this.

There will be a charge for individual or group music tuition, if this is not part of the National Curriculum. The peripatetic music teachers teach individual or small group lessons for which we make a charge. We give parents of eligible children information about additional music tuition and its associated costs at the start of each school year.

4.4 School Dinners

All children attending the school may opt to take a cooked lunch during the midday break; the cost of the lunch is the standard charge across the Borough applying at the time.

Children who qualify for Free School Meals are exempt from this charge.

- The School reserves the right to reduce payments on a temporary basis for a family in crisis at the Headteacher's discretion.

5 Extended Services at the School

5.1 After School Clubs

The schools offer a number of additional after school clubs, some of which are run and organized by adults who are not members of the school staff. In such cases we make a small charge for these sessions (see 6 below). The schools will supply on request details of the after school clubs currently taking place.

6. Charging Levels

Where charges apply, these will be levied as appropriate to fully cover the costs on a non-profit making basis.

7. Remissions

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. For the purposes of applying this remissions policy, these circumstances are deemed to apply for any parent who is deemed to be in receipt of an 'eligible benefit'. A parent will be deemed to be in receipt of an eligible benefit if they receive one of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Support under Section 12 (definition of the Asylum and Human Rights Claim) of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006
- Child tax credit, provided that working tax credit is not also received. *Please go to the website <https://www.gov.uk/child-tax-credit/what-youll-get> for an up to date guide of information relating to what you could be entitled to.*
- The guarantee element of state pension credit
- Universal credit in prescribed circumstances**

***the Government plans to prescribe the circumstances when universal credit is fully rolled out"*

8. Additional Considerations

Both schools recognize their responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits do not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Where possible we shall publish a list of visits, giving parents as much notice as possible.
- We shall establish a system for parents to pay in installments where this is more convenient to them.
- When an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by installments 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 this method of selection where possible.

9. Monitoring and Review

The application of this policy will be monitored by the finance committee of the Governing Body and will be reviewed annually as part of the budget setting cycle.