

ST VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Charges, Remissions and Refunds Policy

(Policy information taken from DfE guidance on Charging for school activities – no updates since May 2018)

Mission Statement

*"We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn
love and grow together"*

Reviewed Spring 2024
To be reviewed Spring 2026
Reviewed by: Resource Committee

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Nathan Barry', written over a horizontal line.

Chair of Governors
pp by Vice Chair Nathan Barry

Date ratified: 12th March 2024

The Charges Policy

It is the policy of our school to charge for the following areas of activity as permitted under Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996.

Optional Extra Activities

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled. Schools must ensure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. Schools should avoid sending colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments and direct debit or standing order mandates should not be sent to parents when requesting contributions

Optional extra activities which take place wholly or mainly outside schools hours, but which are not provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and are not required by the National Curriculum. Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges.

A voluntary contribution will be requested where activities described above take place wholly or mainly within school hours.

Music Tuition

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument.

Charges may be made when associated with individual or group tuition in playing a musical instrument whether in or out of school hours, unless it is provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum. Charges will not exceed the cost of the provision.

Hertfordshire LA operates a remission policy in relation to individual tuition in playing a musical instrument. Details of the current scheme are available from the Hertfordshire Music Centre.

School Trips

A contribution will be requested to cover the cost of a pupil's participation on most school trips. The school reserves the right to cancel any school trip where the level of contributions received

does not cover the cost. It is important to note that no child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay.

Residential Trip

Schools cannot charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;
- education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Schools **can** charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

A charge is made for board and lodging on residential visits but this will not exceed the actual cost.

The charge for the board and lodging costs of a residential visit will be remitted in the case of pupils whose parents/carers qualify for free school meals, as informed by Hertfordshire County Council at the time of payment.

Cooking Ingredients/Technology materials

The school will make a small charge to cover the costs of materials/ingredients for subjects such as design or food technology where partners have indicated in advance that they would like their child to bring home the finished product.

The Remissions and Refunds Policy

Where an activity makes an unexpected surplus the school will consider making a refund. St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School will make a refund where the surplus is either:

- 5% or more of the total cost per person, or
- £5 or more per person

Surpluses will be reimbursed in 'round amounts' eg, £3 not £3.29.

Where a refund is offered, the accompanying letter will indicate that a surplus of £x per pupil has been made and that if the parent/carer would like to take advantage of it they should contact the office by a date 'x' weeks in advance. If the school is not contacted by that date it will assume that the refund has been donated to school funds. All refunds will be made via BACS in order to maintain a clear audit trail. Refunds donated to the school will be transferred to an appropriate budget heading, following approval from the School Business Manager.