



Charging Policy

Reviewed by:	Resources Committee
Date of approval:	June 2016
School's date for review:	June 2019

Our mission statement

In our school, we aim to:

- Provide a stimulating and caring Christian environment in which children can gain in experience and understanding, and develop to the full their own talents and abilities within the tenets of the Christian faith.
- In this environment, they are encouraged to acquire both self-respect and respect for other members of the community, and to care for their local environment.
- Ensure that the children have a firm grasp of basic skills, and encourage the acquisition of these through interesting and stimulating work.
- Foster the development of an enquiring attitude towards work and to encourage the creative and imaginative ability of the child.
- Achieve a harmonious school atmosphere in which the child will identify strongly with the school and its objectives, including the links with All Saints Church.

Principle

The Governors and staff at All Saints C of E (VA) Primary School adhere to the principle that state education should be provided free. However it is recognised that activities which enrich the curriculum, in particular educational visits out of school, cannot be funded from the delegated budget.

Offsite visits

Visits made off the school site greatly benefit pupils involved and enrich the curriculum. They range across the curriculum, e.g. historical, geographical, literary, musical, artistic, religious and scientific. Groups have also attended national sports events, e.g. cricket match at Lords.

Such enrichment activities are often dependent on **voluntary contributions** from parents/carers. The Headteacher or Governing Body may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours;
- school equipment;
- school funds generally.

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary, though, and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it will be cancelled.

Letters to parents/carers, providing details of the event and requesting the full amount of the suggested contribution, are sent in good time so that the permission slips and money can be sent in to the school office. If the visit is requiring a substantial sum of money e.g. a day visit to France, or a residential trip, then parents are asked to pay a **deposit** or are invited to **pay in instalments** over a longer period of time.

Residential Trips

The school is permitted to charge for the cost of board and lodging during residential school trips, even if they occur mainly during school time. Other costs are met with voluntary contributions. When sufficient contributions are not forthcoming for the proposed activities they may have to be cancelled or curtailed.

Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours, children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of the charge for board and lodging:

- 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 guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and their annual income, assessed by the Inland Revenue, does not exceed £16,190 (current figure)*
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

*These figures and other criteria for FSM may change. The school will adopt the current qualifying thresholds that apply at the time. Please refer to the GOV.UK website for the most up-to-date criteria.

Where it is felt by the parent/carer and/or the class teacher that there are **cases of hardship** for families in receipt of income supplement or similar, the requested voluntary contribution may be reduced or waived at the discretion of the Headteacher. All discussions concerning cases of hardship will be strictly confidential.

In the event of a visit or activity being cancelled, those parents who have made a contribution will be **reimbursed**. After the final finances of a visit are calculated, if a surplus of funds in excess of £3.00 per pupil remains, this money will be reimbursed to parents.

As often as possible, special events held in school are funded from the **school budget** or from a direct contribution from the **PTA funds**, e.g. a theatre group, a visiting author, a D&T workshop. Where the costs would otherwise be prohibitive, parents/carers may be asked to make a small **voluntary contribution** of approximately £1.00 to £3.00.

There may occasionally be a charge for items made in **technology** or **art**, e.g. torch with bulb and batteries.

Some **extra-curricular school clubs** are charged for, for example, those being led by an external **sports coach** e.g. football, netball, basketball, short tennis, and payment is made direct to the sports club, e.g. Rising Stars. Other school clubs are free, the only charge being to cover **consumables**, e.g. Dance Club costume materials, cooking club.

Instrumental Music Lessons

A charge is permitted for instrumental music tuition undertaken in school hours for up to and including four pupils. **Music lessons** are provided by peripatetic teachers from Stevenage Music School. Parents/Carers are asked for payment for the lessons at the start of the term, and notice of withdrawal from lessons must be given in writing at least half a term in advance. In cases of financial difficulty, the same guidance applies as mentioned above. In exceptional circumstances, where a pupil shows some talent or where additional music lessons would support his/her special needs, the school may offer lessons at little or no charge.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Resources Committee on behalf of the Full Governing Body.