

## Charging Policy



We are children of God: we achieve, believe and care.

Ratified on: 21/10/2020

Chair: C Casey

Headteacher: Judith Black

To be reviewed: 2023

# **St Joseph's is a happy and caring Catholic school where everyone aspires to reach their true potential with Christ at the heart of all we do.**

## **Introduction**

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum with the exception of individual or group music tuition.

Schools cannot charge for:

- an admission application to any state-funded school-paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the Admissions process.
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment).
- education provided 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.
- instrumental or vocal tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments individually or in groups if the tuition is required as 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 unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent – see also Optional extras and music tuition.
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school.
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents.

Schools can charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes the pupil to own them;
- Optional Extras. See page 2
- Music and Vocal Tuition, in limited circumstances. See page 4.
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities

## **Optional Extras**

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as "optional extras". Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. Optional extras are:

- education provided inside or outside of school time that is not:

- a) part of the National Curriculum;
- b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
- c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s), if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport that is not required to take the pupil to school, or to other premises where the local education authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education;
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential trip;
- extended day services offered to pupils e.g. after-school clubs and supervised homework sessions;
- materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra.
- the cost of buildings and accommodation
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra;
- the cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra
- additional activities & transport expenses for activities i.e. visits to museums, theatre, musical events, outdoor adventure activities

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils may not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It may not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Payment should be made in advance and school will follow-up any non-payment of tuition or services and refer to Legal services if necessary. School also reserves the right to:

- 1) withdraw a child from the service or activity or cease lessons if there are outstanding payments to be made and/or;
- 2) recover monies from other income paid to the school by the debtor.

Please note that pupils entitled to Free School Meals and/or Pupil Premium may not be charged or may receive a concession for 'Optional Extras'.

## **Voluntary Contributions**

Nothing in legislation prevents a school from asking for voluntary contributions to benefit the school or any school activities. When organising school trips, visits or activities in school which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the trip/visit/activity. All contributions are voluntary and there is no obligation to make a contribution however, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher will make this clear to parents at the outset. It is also important to note that no child will be excluded from an activity simply because his parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If however insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund the activity or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled.

**School Visits** - Please see Optional extras and Voluntary contributions.

### Residential Visits

If the school organises a Residential Visit in school time or mainly school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, we do not make any charge for the education. However we do make a charge to cover the costs of board, lodging and transport.

School cannot charge for:

- education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours;
- education provided on any trip 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.

School can charge for:

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

When a school informs parents about a forthcoming trip, they should make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits may be exempt from paying the full cost of board and lodging:

- Income Support
- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) does not exceed the tax year limit

- The guarantee element of State pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008.
- If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. School will make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school trips will be.

Payment should be made in advance and school will follow-up any non-payment of tuition or services and refer to Legal services if necessary. School also reserves the right to:

1) withdraw a child from the service or activity or cease lessons if there are outstanding payments to be made and/or; 2) recover monies from other income paid to the school by the debtor.

Please note that pupils entitled to Free School Meals and/or Pupil Premium may receive a concession for residential visits.

### **Music Tuition**

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours as part of the National Curriculum must be free some instrumental and vocal tuition (music lessons) are exceptions to this rule. Charges may be made for vocal or instrumental tuition in for either an individual pupil or groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of staff providing tuition. This is a permitted optional extra.

Payment should be made in advance and school will follow-up any non-payment of tuition or services and refer to Legal services if necessary. School also reserves the right to:

1) withdraw a child from the service or activity or cease lessons if there are outstanding payments to be made and/or; 2) recover monies from other income paid to the school by the debtor. Please note that pupils entitled to Free School Meals and/or Pupil Premium are not charged for individual music or vocal tuition or small group lessons.

### **Swimming**

When swimming is organised for pupils in Key Stage2, this takes place in school time and is part of the National Curriculum. We do not charge for this activity.

### **Transport**

Schools cannot charge for:

- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;

- transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school.

School can charge for:

- any other transport. This is a permitted optional extra. See page 2.

### Extra Curricular/After School Activities

The school offers a range of After School Activities/Extra Curricular Activities, including Cookery, Archery, PE, Art & Crafts. A charge is made for these to contribute to the cost of the leaders and coaches.

Payment should be made in advance and school will follow-up any non-payment of tuition or services and refer to Legal services if necessary. School also reserves the right to:

1) withdraw a child from the service or activity or cease lessons if there are outstanding payments to be made and/or; 2) recover monies from other income paid to the school by the debtor

Please note that pupils entitled to Free School Meals and/or Pupil Premium may not be charged or may receive a concession for these activities.

### **Payment Methods**

Payments should be made, wherever possible using Sunderland City Council's "pay for it" portal. If on-line payment cannot be made cash or cheques can be used, cheques should be made payable to Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust.

### **Refunds**

If an activity or visit is cancelled by the school, refunds will be made via BACS payment. Parents will be asked, at the time the decision is made to cancel the activity or trip for their bank account details via a secure method. Payments will then be made by the Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust directly into the parent's bank account.

### **Lettings – Hire of School premises and Grounds**

- In line with Local authority policy and financial regulations, applications for hire of school premises and grounds must be made to the Governors of St. Joseph's, on the appropriate Hire Form.
- Governors will decide on the rate of charge to be levied and will ensure sufficient charge be made for lettings to cover all Site Manager, heating/lighting/cleaning and wear and tear costs.
- Each application will be considered individually and the charge determined in accordance with the school's scale of charges.

- Hirer's are expected to have their own insurance liability cover, have appropriate qualifications, training etc. and where necessary have DBS clearance.
- The School will either issue a License agreement to the Hirer or, depending on use, the school may request a Transfer of Control application (TOCA is completed and a Transfer of Control Agreement (TOCA) agreement may then be reached between the school and the Hirer.
- The Hirer will be expected to pay in advance or at the latest on the day of use.
- Where there is a Governor or School arranged out-of-hours meeting or event, Governors may decide that it is not as such a 'Letting' and may decide to waiver any hire charge or charge a reduced fee for example use of school for Governors meetings. Staff meetings, Parent, Teacher meetings (PTA), school arranged football matches and community use of school.

### Freedom of Information

In accordance with the Freedom of Information act and in line with Local Authority advice, Governors reserve the right to recover the additional costs of retrieving and sending information which has occurred as a result of a Freedom of Information enquiry.

Further information is available from the DFE [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)