The Federation of St Bernadette's and St. Patrick's Catholic Primary Schools

Charging and Remissions Policy

Policy Reference:	CR1 – F
Responsibility:	Buildings and Finance Committee
Designation:	Statutory
Reviewed by:	V Ryan
This Review:	October 2026
Next Review Due:	October 2027
Cycle:	Annual
Ratified by Full Governing Body on:	
Signed:	
Gerard Owens	

At our school, with Jesus in our hearts, we have:

The passion to learn;
The courage to fail; The strength to love.

With Christ as our guide and example we celebrate the uniqueness of the individual.

Together we will try to:
Learn from Jesus;
Love like Jesus;
Live like Jesus.

Chargeable and Non-chargeable Activities

Education During School Hours

No charges can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Education during school hours must be free. This includes materials, equipment and transport provided in school hours by the Local Authority (LA) or by either school in the federation to carry pupils between the school and an activity. "School hours" are those when the school is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the school day. Parents and others have a right to information about school hours: this is published on each school web-site.

There is an exception for education during school hours relating to musical instrument tuition. Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of up to four pupils to play a musical instrument. Charges may be made only if the tuition is not an essential part of the National Curriculum nor part of a public examination syllabus.

Education Partly During School Hours

Sometimes an activity may happen partly during and partly outside school hours. If most of the time spent on a non-residential activity occurs during school hours, that activity counts as taking place entirely in school hours and no charges can be made. Time spent on travel counts as being during school hours only if the travel takes place during school hours.

Education Outside School Hours

Charges can be made for activities that happen outside school hours when those activities are not a necessary part of the National Curriculum and do not form part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education. No charges can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for a public examination.

Other Activities Outside School Hours – "Optional Extras"

Charges can be made for other activities which take place outside school hours ("optional extras"), if parents agree to pay. The Governing Body decides whether to charge for optional extras.

Residential activities

If a residential activity takes places largely during school hours and meets the requirements for a public examination or is to do with the National Curriculum or religious education, no charges can be made either for the education or for the cost of travel. However, charges may be made for board and lodging, except for pupils who are eligible for free school meals or pupils whose parents are receiving any of:

- 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 Pension Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

The Headteachers will advise parents of the right to claim for free activities if they are receiving these benefits.

Public Examinations

No charges can be made for entering pupils in public examinations.
Examination entry fees may be charged if:

- The examination is on the set list, but the pupil was not prepared for it by the school
- The examination is not on the set list but the school arranges for the pupil to take it
- A pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the Governing Body or the LA originally paid or agreed to pay the examination fee.

Voluntary Contributions
Although the federation cannot charge for school-time activities, it may invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions for activities which would otherwise be prohibited by cost. All requests to parents for voluntary contributions make it clear that the contributions are voluntary and that no pupils are left out of activities because their parents cannot or will not make voluntary contributions. Pupils are not treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made voluntary contributions.

If a particular activity cannot take place without voluntary contributions from parents, this is to be explained when the request is made. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity feasible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, the activity will be cancelled.

There is no limit to the level of voluntary contributions which parents or others can make to school activities, nor is any restriction placed on the use which can be made of such contributions. For example, a request for a contribution towards the cost of a particular activity may include the cost of subsidising pupils from low-income families and / or the cost of travel for accompanying adults. As another example, parents may sometimes be asked to contribute towards part of the cost at the time of the visit or activity, and the rest being met from the proceeds of general fund raising events.

Policies on Charges for Activities and Other Chargeable Services

Activities to Enrich the Curriculum
Voluntary contributions may be requested.

Residential Study Visits
Charges not exceeding costs will be made for specialist tuition and board and lodging.
Each school usually offers a residential trip for Year 6, which takes place during school time. The whole package includes board and lodgings, travel and tuition / activities. Parents are made aware very early on of the cost to them of the trip and given plenty of time to pay. Parents who may find the amount difficult to raise are invited to speak to the appropriate Headteacher.

Musical Instrument Tuition
The cost of instrumental lessons to individuals and small groups is met through charges to parents via 3rd party companies. Separate charges may be made for instrument hire.

Extra-Curricular Clubs
Charges may be made for participation in extra-curricular activities, to meet the costs of materials and staffing.

Extended School Services
See separate charging policies.

Lettings
Charges are applicable for hiring either of the school premises and facilities for external purposes. Terms and conditions of hire are contained in a separate Lettings Policy and details of the charges applicable are available through the school office.

Other Services
Charges may be made for the use of premises and other services / facilities available from each school. Details of charges are available from each school office. Charges for community users may be subsidised, at the discretion of the Headteachers. The services that come under this category include, but are not limited to:

- Use of photocopiers, telephones and internet facilities
- Individuals' or groups' use of school-provided publication tools as a means of publicising items and of broadcasting general circulars

- Use of either school premises to take private tuition sessions not part of the school provision
- Use of child-care provided through either school during Inset Days.

Use of Assets No Longer of Use to the School
Occasionally, items of value, e.g. metals, wood, IT equipment and other assets and resources, come to the end of their useful life for the federation. These can sometimes be made available to staff, parents or others associated with each school by private arrangement with the School Governors. If agreement can be reached with an individual for the disposal of any such items, the School Governors may call for a donation to school funds commensurate with their value.

Remissions
Parents who have made a voluntary contribution will be offered a refund if their child is unable to attend an activity through illness; a medical certificate will be required.

The Governing Body may provide financial support from each school budget or external grants, for parents who are unable to meet the full cost of voluntary contributions or charges, following application to the appropriate Headteacher. The Headteachers have delegated powers to allocate funds in this way, but the Buildings and Finance Committee will be informed in general terms of the total provided for each activity.

The Governing Body will support the development of all community groups' use of each school through a flexible charging approach. This may include offering reduced rates for up to one month in order to assist a new group and will be negotiated through the Headteachers.

The federation takes early action to try to avoid parents getting into debt for charged activities (such as music lessons) which are not an essential part of the National Curriculum. The federation will adhere to the debt recovery procedure as defined by the local authority and may seek the advice of Education Financial Services and Legal Services in recovering debt.