

# Saint Martin's Catholic Academy

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## Charging & Remissions Policy

May 2015

## Charging and Remissions Policy

The charging and remissions policy adopted by the governing body ensures that statutory requirements are met and is intended to reflect the general principles of the Education Act which identifies activities for which:

- 1) Charges will not be made
- 2) Charges will be made
- 3) Charges may be waived

## Voluntary contributions

The academy will seek voluntary contributions for any activity in order to benefit the academy or support an activity whether during or outside academy hours, residential or non-residential and including inviting parents to pay for materials or ingredients where they wish to own the finished product. However all requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that students of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have. Such contributions will be genuinely voluntary.

There is no limit to the level of voluntary contributions which parents/carers, or others, can make to academy activities, nor is there any restriction placed on the use which can be made of such contributions, provided they are used for the purpose specified in the request for them. They could, for example, be used to subsidise students from low-income families, or the cost of travel for accompanying staff.

The Law says that:

- If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the parents will be notified of this from the outset.
- No student will be excluded from an activity because the 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.

## Education Provided Within Academy Hours

Education provided by any Academy for its registered students should be free of charge if it takes place wholly or mainly during academy hours, academy hours being those hours when a academy is actually in session and not including the break in the middle of the day. This means that neither the student nor his or her parents or carers may be required to pay for, or to supply, any materials, books, instruments or other equipment for use in connection with education provided during academy hours.

## Education Provided Out of Academy Hours

Where education is provided out of academy hours, charging is permitted, except where the education is provided:

- a) To fulfil any requirements specified in the syllabus for a prescribed Public examination; or
- b) Specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to the Curriculum:
- c) To fulfil duties relating to Religious Education.

In these cases the only charge that may be made is for board and lodging or for residential trips.

## Music Tuition

The main exception to the principle of free education, which the law allows is that a charge may be made in respect of individual tuition in playing any musical instrument, even if such tuition takes place during academy hours. Parental/carer agreement must be obtained before a student is given that tuition.

## Activities run by a Third Party

The Act permits an organisation other than the governing body to levy a charge directly on parents/carers for activities organised in academy hours by a non-academy organisation. The academy will not be involved in collection of charges on behalf of the third party organisation.

Where pupils are granted leave of absence to attend these activities it would be for parents/carers and any staff members similarly released to satisfy themselves about the adequacy of the arrangements made by the third party to secure the safety and welfare of the students.

## Charging Policy

If a charge is made for each student, it should not exceed the actual cost. If further funds are needed for additional costs e.g. to help hardship cases this must be by voluntary contributions or general fund raising.

## Board and Lodging on Residential Visits

Board & lodging on residential visits may be charged for whether or not the visit takes place within academy time and whether or not the activity is provided to fulfil the requirements of:

- the syllabus of a prescribed public examination; or
- of the National Curriculum; or
- to fulfil statutory duties relating to religious education.

Charges for board and lodging must not exceed the actual cost to the student They must not, for example, include any element representing a share of the costs of staff accompanying the visit. (This may, however, be covered by voluntary contributions.)

Governors will, as a statutory minimum, remit any charges for board and lodging in the case of students whose parents/carers are in receipt of Income Support or Child Tax Credit etc. where the activity is deemed to take place in academy hours. Governors may wish to consider whether to remit charges in other circumstances.

### **'Optional Extra' Activities**

'Optional extra' activities are those which take place wholly or mainly outside academy hours, but which are not provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and are not required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the national curriculum or to religious education.

Participation will be on the basis of parental/carer choice and a willingness to meet such charges as are made. Any charge made in respect of individual students may include an appropriate element for the following: a student's travel costs; a student's board and lodging; materials, books, instruments and other equipment; non-staff costs; entrance fees to museums, theatres etc; insurance costs.

It should be noted that any charge for an 'optional extra' activity, as distinct from a request for a voluntary contribution, should not exceed the actual cost of providing that activity, divided equally by the number of pupils willing to participate. 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.

The costs of staff involved in optional extra activities may only be passed on through charges if:-

- they are engaged specifically by the governors for the purpose of providing the activity;
- they are employed by the governors to provide instrumental music tuition; or
- they are staff already employed by the governors and have been engaged on a separate contract for services to provide the optional extra

### **Academy Minibuses or transport provided by the Academy**

Any transport provided in academy hours to carry particular students between the academy and any other place where the student's educational course is to be provided must be free of charge. However, if a student makes use of transport not provided by the academy to travel direct from home to an activity sanctioned, though not provided by the academy, then parents/carers may be asked to meet the cost of such travel. An example of this would be travel direct from home to work experience and vice versa.

### **Charging in Kind**

The cost of ingredients, materials, equipment etc. needed for practical subjects such as craft or food technology, must be budgeted for and borne by the academy. Parents/carers who are willing to contribute in cash or kind can however be encouraged to do so on a voluntary basis.

Students must not be treated differently according to whether or not materials are being provided by their parents. It is recognised that much of the practical work in craft or food technology is of an investigative nature and will not necessarily result in a "finished product", however this is an essential part of the learning process.

## Breakages and Fines

There is nothing to prevent the academy from asking parents/carers to pay for the cost of replacing a broken window or defaced, damaged or lost textbook where this is the result of a student's behaviour. Parents/carers cannot, however, be taken to court for this money.

**Agreed by Principal** .....

**Date** .....