



**St. John the Baptist**  
**Catholic Primary School**

*We will prepare the way by loving, living and learning with the Lord*

# **Charging and Remissions Policy**

**Date of Policy approval: 2.12.21**

**Policy approved: 8.12.22**

**Date of next review: December 2023**

## **Introduction**

The Local Governing Body of St John the Baptist Catholic Primary School recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including trips and clubs can make towards pupils' education. We believe that all of our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from these enriching activities and experiences, regardless of their parents' financial means, whilst operating within the parameters of the school budget.

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum, although parents may be asked for voluntary contributions for activities and visits, which may be organised from time to time, to enrich the curriculum.

Within the current climate of restricted funding for schools the contributions made by parents towards these activities is vital to them continuing. We will continue to make charges and ask for voluntary contributions where appropriate, acknowledging our responsibility to set a well-informed and balanced budget each year, whilst always taking care that this is done sensitively.

Governors have developed this policy in line with current guidance from the Authority regarding charging for school activities.

## **Voluntary Contributions**

When organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute towards the cost of the trip. All contributions are voluntary and do not exceed the actual cost. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions Governors may decide to cancel a trip.

Where a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not made a contribution, as the school will have met the shortfall to support the visit. We do not treat these children differently from any other participants. Parents who have contributed voluntarily may have a refund, if their child is unable to take part due to illness.

Additional activities organised by the school which may require voluntary contributions, include:

- Visits to museums or places of historical interest;
- Sporting activities off the school premises, requiring transport;
- Outdoor adventure activities;
- Theatre/cinema trips;
- Musical events;
- Visiting author/theatre companies;
- Farm visits.

### **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 make no charge for the educational activities. However charges will be made for the board, lodgings and travel expenses.

There may be remission of some or all of the charge where a family is in receipt of the following benefits:

- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- Child Tax Credit, provided you are NOT entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) that as at 6th April 2010 does not exceed £16,190;
- Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit;
- Employment and Support Allowance Income Related (ESA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Where you are entitled to Working Tax Credit during the 4 week period immediately after your employment ceases, or after you start to work less than 16 hours per week, your child is entitled to free school meals.

Parents who are eligible for full remission of charges will be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards costs.

Ineligible families may also experience difficulties in meeting the costs of these visits. Parents are encouraged to contact the Head teacher in confidence if this relates to them as Governors do not want to deny any opportunity afforded to pupils, purely on financial grounds. However, Governors may have to cancel a proposed trip if the shortfall in contributions is, in their opinion, unaffordable.

### **School Uniform**

Other than school ties, school uniform is no longer available to buy from school. Jumpers, cardigans and other items *are available for parents to buy, via our supplier Mapac. In cases of severe financial hardship, school uniform may be supplied free of charge, at the discretion of the Head Teacher. Parents must apply, in writing, directly to the Head Teacher if they wish to be considered for this special dispensation.*

### **Music Tuition**

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this.

## **Swimming Lessons**

In Year 3, 4, 5 and 6, all children will participate in either 1 term or ½ a term of swimming lessons at North Solihull Sports centre. Tuition and transport are provided free of charge, paid for from the school budget.

## **Charities**

The School supports a number of charities throughout the year. Fundraising events occur each term and children will be asked to participate in fun days, non-uniform days and other events to raise money for various charities. Contributions from parents towards these nominated charities are voluntary.

## **Damage/Loss to School Property**

Where an individual causes damage to school property either intentionally or through negligence, Governors reserve the right to levy a charge not exceeding the cost of the replacement or repairs. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at the discretion of the Board of Governors.

## **Extra-Curricular Clubs**

Some of our extra-curricular activities are run by professional coaches or external organisations who administer their own charging system. These are voluntary activities which you may choose to take advantage of, which the school may help to administer. The school also aims to ensure that there are regular free clubs run by our own staff to provide additional opportunities to all our pupils.

## **Breakfast / After School Club**

SJB Club operates a breakfast and after school club. All pupils attending the club must register at the start of each academic year and sign a contract detailing the terms and conditions of use.

The club is run as a limited service to the parents/ carers of the school who are in full time work or education and charges are set to cover all running costs, any surplus/profits will be invested back into the club.

Governors will review all charges once each year to ensure that the club is self-financing and not supported by the school budget. Any fee increases will be notified to parents no less than 4 weeks before the increase is affected.

To ensure that parents do not build large debts, which they may be unable to repay, fees are payable monthly/weekly **in advance** as notified by the Club. Fees not paid on the due date may incur an additional £5.00 charge, to cover admin.

Parents enter into the agreement with the SJB Club voluntarily, the club is offered as an optional extra for the convenience of our parents who need childcare at the start and end of the school day. As such, the Club charges are not subject to our remissions policy.

Late payment or other infringements of the terms and conditions of use may result in a child being excluded from the club. The SJB club will provide one week written notice where a child is to be excluded from participating in the Club, unless their attendance may compromise the safety of our staff and students.

Where parents have booked regular childcare sessions, one week **written and paid** notice is required if the parent wishes to end their contract.

### **School Meals**

Children in our Reception, Year1 and Year2 classes are entitled to Universal Free School Meals and will not be charged for any school lunches provided.

Children in KS2 requiring a school meal, are required to pay in advance, on the Monday of the week in which the meals are to be taken, unless entitled to Free School Meals. Accounts that fall into arrears will be sent 2 reminders requesting payment within fourteen days. Meals will not be provided to children where there is debt on the account. If the account remains unsettled the School will provide no further meals until the arrears are paid (see Debt Management policy). Parents will be asked to send children into school with a packed lunch.

Parents may apply to Education Welfare Benefits for free school meals if they are in receipt of certain benefits (see notes re. residential visits).

### **Other charges to parents**

There may be other items or services provided to parents/pupils by the school from time to time such as First Holy Communion items, revision books etc. These will be items provided at the parents' request and will attract a charge no greater than the actual cost of providing these items/services.

### **Lettings**

The school allows the use of its facilities in line with SMBC lettings policy and charging rates. All lettings are to be booked on an official lettings form. An invoice will be raised termly and is due for payment within 30 days. Failure to pay in time will result in the withdrawal of St Johns facilities, until the account is cleared.

## **Remissions Policy**

The Head Teacher, acting on behalf of the Local Governing Body may remit, in full or in part, charges in respect of a pupil, if they feel that it is reasonable in the circumstances.

Parents unable to pay for any of the school activities, should not hesitate to speak to the Head Teacher, in confidence, in the first instance. Each situation will be judged on its own merits and all remissions will be authorised by the Head Teacher.