

**St Gregory's C of E (VA) Primary School**

**New Street, Marnhull, Sturminster Newton, Dorset DT10 1PZ**

**Policy Document**

**Charging and Remissions Policy**

**Review Interval: Annually**

**Date approved by Governing Body: February 2022**

**Review Date: February 2023**

**CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY**

**AIMS**

The purpose of the Policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those items which the school will provide free of charge and those items where there may be a charge, what remissions will be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents.

The policy is consistent with the Department for Education Guidance ‘Charging for School Activities’ which was last updated in May 2018 and The Education Act 1996.

At St Gregory’s School we want to provide a range of experiences to enrich and extend our children’s learning and contribute to their personal development. All our children should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school visits, curricular and extra-curricular activities. However, many of these activities have a cost associated with them which, unfortunately cannot be met from the limited funds in our delegated budget from the Local Authority.

We are allowed under current regulations to make charges for some activities and request voluntary contributions from parents for other activities.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

The headteacher will ensure that staff are familiar with and correctly apply the policy. The Governors will review the policy from time to time to ensure it meets with current guidance from the Department for Education.

**CHARGES**

All activities that are part of the National Curriculum during the normal school day will be provided free of charge. This includes the supply of any materials, books, instruments and other equipment.

**MUSIC TUITION**

Regulations make clear that charges may only be made if the teaching is not part of the National Curriculum.

At St Gregory’s all children study music as part of the normal school curriculum, which we do not charge for, including the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.

We have visiting peripatetic music teachers who teach individuals or small group lessons. We will provide parents with information about additional music tuition, but there is a charge for these lessons and the peripatetic teacher will inform parents of these charges at the start of each academic year.

**RESIDENTIAL TRIPS**

We organise a residential trip for Year 5 and Year 6 children, both taking place in the Summer Term. Parents will be asked to meet the full cost of board and lodging and to make a voluntary contribution towards travel expenses for the trips. For those children who are in receipt of support benefits (see Remissions section) the cost of board and lodging will be met by the school.

**VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS**

Under current legislation we are allowed to ask parents to make a voluntary contribution towards activities during the school day which entail additional costs.

Parents may be asked to make a voluntary contribution for the following:

* School trips (eg: beach, theatre visits, museums, places of interest, etc)
* Sporting activities which require transport
* Outdoor adventure activities
* Events provided during the school day, which cover the National Curriculum

All parents will be informed of the decision to ask for voluntary contributions during the initial letter of information. Parents will only be asked for contributions to cover the actual cost of the activity for their child. The school makes no profit from these events.

The headteacher, teacher in charge or administrative officer will also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution. No child will be prevented from participating because his/her parents are unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution. However, in order for an activity to take place it will be necessary for the school to receive a realistic contribution. For example, if the school is expected to contribute more than 10% of the total cost then the activity may be deemed not financially viable and we will exercise our discretionary right to cancel.

Parental permission for all of these activities will be sought via our online PING system or by a paper copy.

If parents do not want their child to participate in any of these activities – if no permission is received then the child (ren) will not take part. The school is reliant upon parents to inform them of this – but will send out reminders.

**PANTOMIME**

The Pantomime is usually a treat trip (just for fun) and not a voluntary contribution trip. As a Pantomime is an extra activity, the school cannot pay for the cost of the trip, nor is it obliged to financially contribute towards it. If parents do not want their children to go to a Pantomime, their children will attend school as normal.

**SWIMMING**

The school organises swimming lessons, which are part of the National Curriculum for some year groups, at the discretion of the school during normal school time. We are not permitted to make a charge for this activity, as it is part of the National Curriculum. However, there is a further cost to the school for transporting children to the local swimming pool and we will ask parents to provide a voluntary contribution towards the costs of transport. Once again, no child will be excluded from this activity if his/her parents cannot or will not make a voluntary contribution towards the transport costs. However, should we receive insufficient funds from parents, then we shall have no alternative but to use funds which would otherwise be allocated to other areas of the curriculum. This reallocation of resources will have a direct impact upon the children’s learning.

**OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF THE SCHOOL DAY**

We will charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day which are not part of the National Curriculum. Charges are currently applied to breakfast and after school club.

**REMISSIONS**

Parents who are in receipt of any of the support payments listed below will not be expected to pay for board and lodging costs for residential trips. However, we will still ask those parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the transport costs of a residential trip.

The qualifying support payments are:

* Income Support
* Income-Based Job Seeker’s Allowance
* Income related Employment and Support Allowance
* Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
* Child Tax credit, where the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and the family’s annual income (as assessed by HMRC) does not exceed £16,190 in the tax year 2018/2019.
* Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after qualifying for Working Tax Credit ceases.
* Universal Credit – (provided an individual has an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of their most recent assessment periods)
* Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit

Evidence of eligibility will need to be produced.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and will be amended in line with any subsequent guidelines from the Department for Education.