



Charging and Remissions Policy

Approval date: February 2022
Review date: February 2023

Signed..... Date
Chair of Governors

Signed..... Date
Headteacher

Our Christian Vision

Learning, Loving, Living in God’s Family

*“But I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God; I trust in God’s unfailing love forever and ever.”
Psalm 52:8*



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Our Christian Vision is that as part of God's faithful and fruitful family, we start as seeds, and from our roots in learning, loving and living we branch out and grow into flourishing trees.

Our vision mirrors that of the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-13). In the story the seed is God's word. The seed takes root and grows in the fertile soil. We are like the seeds flourishing in our rich learning at St Nicholas School.

At St Nicholas we strive to unlock the hidden treasures within each child in a happy, safe and caring Christian environment. Through nurturing and motivation, we strive to shape confident, creative and independent learners, who embrace Christian values, and who will become responsible, compassionate and inspirational members of society.



Rationale

We believe that all pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra curricular) independent of their parents financial

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means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities are offered and at the same time try and minimise the financial barriers that may prevent some children taking full advantage of the opportunities offered.

St Nicholas School Governing body will not make charges for:

- admission to our school - paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2014 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 (Point 1 below), or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination, with the exception of music exams, that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school (Point 2 below) with the exception of music examinations.

1. It should be noted that 'part of the national curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the national curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills).
2. 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.

St Nicholas School Governing body may make charges for:

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 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

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- c) part of religious education,
- d) design and technology including food technology.

- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education);
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit;
- Extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- any 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; and
- the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must 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 pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Voluntary Contributions

St Nicholas School Governing Body may ask for voluntary contributions for certain events or activities such as school trips, swimming lessons, off site sporting activities

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and whole class music lessons. Voluntary contributions may also be requested for workshops or visiting performances carried out during school hours. This would be the case when without parental contributions, the activity would not be able to take place.

Wherever we are asking for a voluntary contribution we will make this clear in the letters that we write to you as parents. We will make it clear that there is no obligation to make any contribution. It is important to note that no child will be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit or activity, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it may be cancelled.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule. We will charge for instrumental lessons within St Nicholas School as per the Hertfordshire music service policy and the schools music terms and conditions document.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

The regulations make clear that charges may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme, however, the school may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of these lessons.

The regulations also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

Education partly during school hours for example – Residential trips or extended day visits

Within school we aim to make the children's learning as enjoyable and engaging as possible. This often means looking for opportunities to learn outside of the classroom for example a residential activity centre or sporting activity. There are many rules and regulations around what is deemed to be chargeable under the guidelines which may be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706830/Charging_for_school_activities.pdf

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In our school we will endeavour to give notice of trips and visits and inform you clearly of what activities are within school time and are curriculum activities and those which fall outside of this. The rules around voluntary contributions will then be applied as often these trips do rely heavily on these types of contribution. Wherever possible and definitely for large amounts we will provide a schedule of payments to ease the financial burden.

On all documents requesting payment the following statement will be given:

*'Please let us know **in writing** if you will have problems paying this as there may be some assistance towards the cost depending on the circumstances.'*

We shall consider all written requests however parents may be asked to give evidence that they are in receipt of certain benefits.

If a request is not received in writing and the parent has agreed their child will take part then we will assume that the parent is able to contribute the full cost.

Late fees and payments:

Occasionally the school is put in the position where children are left in their care without the school being notified. Teachers and support staff are not paid for this time and the school will charge a late fee for this service as set out below:

Late collection policy.

The school day finishes at 12 noon or 3.15pm for Nursery, 3.15pm for KS1 and 3.20pm for KS2

The teachers will endeavour to be ready to let the children out of the classrooms at these times.

We expect the children to be collected promptly at the end of the day and arrangements should be made with another parent or carer if you are going to be late.

If someone else will be collecting your child (who hasn't collected your child before) you must let the school know or we will not let your child go.

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If children have not been booked into the After School Club and parents are late picking them up from school at the end of the day, then they will be sent in to the club and parents will be charged in line with this policy.

1. On the first occasion that a child is collected late; parents/carers will be reminded of the late collection policy and will not be charged up to the first 15 minutes but will be charged £5 for every 15 minute period thereafter. Up to a total of £15.
2. On subsequent occasions a charge of £5 will be made if your child is collected up to 15 minutes late. This fee increases by a further £5 for each subsequent 15 minutes up to a total of £15.
3. If a child is collected late from school on more than 5 occasions then it will be necessary to make an appointment with the Head teacher to discuss.

After School Club finishes at 5.30pm. If a child is collected late from After School Club then the late fees apply as detailed in the late collection policy.

The school reserves the right to waive the charge for exceptional circumstances.

Late payment of fees and agreed voluntary contributions:

The school reserves the right to charge a fee for late payment of bills based on:

1. If payment is not made by the due date on the letter then a £5 admin charge will automatically be added to the bill
2. If payment is more than four weeks overdue the school reserves the right to add £10 per bill per week to cover the administration fees linked to chasing of non payment.
3. If payment for residential visits are not made by the due date parents will be reminded of the outstanding amounts if this remains unpaid then the school reserves the right to withdraw the child from the residential visit. Money will be refunded in line with the cancellation policy.
4. School dinners- if school dinner money remains unpaid without an arrangement with the office and kitchen parents will need to provide packed lunches until the bill is paid in full. If the office has to chase for late payment of dinner bills on more than 3 occasions then parents waive their right to be provided with school dinners and will need to provide home packed lunches for the rest of the academic year.

The school reserves the right to waive the charge for exceptional circumstances.

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Remission

If remission is granted then the cost of that activity or trip will be reduced by 50% with the exception of a residential visit.

Remission for a residential visit will be made according to how much the school can afford to contribute and if we can apply for any grants towards the cost. Parents will be advised in writing what the remission will be once we have all the information required.

Payments and payment information:

Payment:

St Nicholas School is a cashless school so all payments for school activities and events will need to be made through the school payment system. We currently use Schoolcomms but are moving to Arbor.

If parents are unable to pay online then the school can print a voucher for parents to pay the amount in cash through Pay Point sited at various locations in Stevenage.

Information on how to register with Arbor is sent out to all parents and is also available on our website or from the school office.

There may be occasions such as charity collections when cash will be accepted.

Cheques:

We will no longer be accepting cheques.

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