



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Charging and Remissions Policy

Through our loving God

We follow in the footsteps of St Joseph

Who helps us to be gentle, caring and hardworking.

As we learn together, we love, value and welcome everyone.

Date adopted: September 2026

Review date: September 2027

Policy owner: Headteacher



Introduction and purpose

- This policy sets out the school's approach to charging and remissions for activities, trips and services provided by St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (including the Pre-School). It is written to comply with sections 449–462 of the Education Act 1996, related DfE guidance, and best practice for maintained voluntary-aided schools. It reflects the school's vision and values: to support every child's academic, social, moral and spiritual development and to ensure access is fair and inclusive for Catholic families and our local community.
- The policy aims to:
 - Ensure a consistent, transparent and lawful approach to charges and remissions.
 - Ensure that all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, regardless of family income.
 - Clarify responsibilities and procedures for staff, governors, parents and carers.
 - Minimise any barriers to participation in school activities.

Scope

- Applies to all activities organised by the school for pupils at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (including the Pre-School and wrap-around care) whether in or out of school hours.
- Covers: curriculum and non-curriculum activities, residential visits, instrumental tuition, school meals, wrap-around care, community use of premises and hire, charging for loss/damage, and voluntary contributions.

Key principles

- Education provided during school hours is free.
- No pupil will be left out of any activity (with the exception of oversea residential visits) because their parents or carers cannot or will not pay; the school will make reasonable efforts to support access through remissions or subsidies where appropriate.
- Charging will be lawful, transparent and consistent with the school's responsibilities as a voluntary-aided school and with diocesan guidance where applicable.
- The governing body is responsible for approving this policy and for reviewing it regularly.



Legal framework and guidance

- Education Act 1996 (sections 449–462) — charging for school activities.
- DfE guidance “Charging for school activities” and related guidance for maintained schools.
- The school’s duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice to ensure reasonable adjustments and inclusion.
- Local diocesan guidance and the maintained schools governance guide where relevant.
- Note for governors/leaders: confirm any diocesan rules affecting charging for religious education, sacraments or other faith-based activities.

Roles and responsibilities

- **Governing Body**
 - Approve, review (recommended annually), and monitor the Charging and Remissions Policy.
 - Ensure the policy complies with statutory requirements and that charging income is used in line with financial regulations.
 - Ensure governors oversee that remissions criteria are applied fairly.
 - The Finance Committee will review and sign off updates to charging for items as per the policy.
 - Governors will receive monitoring information about income, remissions and access through the finance committee’s budget monitoring reports.
- **Headteacher / School Leadership Team**
 - Implement the policy and ensure staff, parents and governors understand it.
 - Authorise charges and remissions as delegated by the governing body.
 - Ensure record-keeping and transparency around voluntary contributions and charges.
 - Liaise with the finance assistant about budgetary impact and support for disadvantaged pupils.
 - The finance committee has delegated authority for remissions decisions and ensuring equitable application.



- **Finance Assistant**

- Maintain records of all charges, contributions and remissions.
- Recover debts in accordance with the school's financial procedures.
- Produce termly reports for leaders and governors on income and outstanding payments.
- Arbor is used to track payments and records are kept accordingly for audit.

- **Senior Leaders**

- Communicate clearly with parents about charges, deadlines, and what is included.
- Leaders monitor any pupils for whom remissions may be appropriate without identifying sensitive information publicly.
- The procedure for requesting support for a child is detailed in letters requesting charges.

- **Parents/Carers**

- Provide timely consent and payments where charges apply unless eligible for remissions.
- Discuss financial concerns confidentially with the school so support options can be considered.
- Parents should contact the headteacher to enquire about support regarding remissions and charges. Timescales for repayments will be set up accordingly.

- **Pupils**

- Attend activities where eligible and comply with school rules and expectations.
- Pupils will be assured that lack of payment will not be publicised.



Chargeable items (what the school may charge for)

1. Optional, non-education activities outside school hours

- Activities which are not part of the National Curriculum, statutory RE or the Early Years Foundation Stage and which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours (e.g., after-school clubs where an external provider/school charges).
- Example: trips, theatre visits.

2. Residential visits

- Charges can be made for board and lodging on residential trips where the trip is optional and not part of the statutory curriculum.
- Where the residential trip takes place wholly or mainly during school time and is essential to the curriculum, the education element must be free; board and lodging can be charged.
- Remission arrangements for low-income families are noted below.

3. Materials and ingredients

- Where parents request and receive materials or products (e.g., DT textiles, pottery), the school may charge for ingredients or materials for finished products, or offer the option to provide materials themselves.

4. Instrumental or vocal tuition

- Charges may be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument or singing if it is not part of the National Curriculum or required by the syllabus for an examination.
- Remissions may apply in certain circumstances.

5. Transport

- School may charge for transport in connection with optional activities outside school hours or where statutory provision does not apply.
- No charge should be made for transporting pupils to school premises where this is the local authority's statutory duty.



6. Wrap-around care and Pre-School charges

- Charges for extended provision outside the free entitlement hours (e.g., breakfast club from 7:10am or after-school club until 6:00pm) will be applied.
- Clear charging schedules for Pre-School places (2–4 years) should be published, showing funded hours entitlement and any fees for additional hours, snacks, or consumables.
- Fees are communicated via individual letters to parents and collected through Arbor Pay.
- Fees align with the nursery funding entitlements and government funded hours.

7. School meals

- Charging may apply for school meals where parents do not qualify for free school meals.
- Free school meal eligibility must be actively promoted; support provided where necessary.

8. Lettings and community use of premises

- The governing body may charge for hire of facilities. Charges should reflect costs and be consistent with the school's lettings policy and Diocesan expectations.
- Letting income is recorded within the school accounting system.

9. Lost or damaged school property

- The school may seek contributions to repair or replace property damaged through pupil negligence. Remissions will be considered for families in genuine hardship.

Voluntary contributions

- The school may request voluntary contributions for activities during school hours that would not otherwise be affordable.
- These contributions are genuinely voluntary; refusal to contribute will not exclude a pupil from the activity, but the activity may be cancelled if insufficient funds are raised.
- The school will make clear when an activity depends on voluntary contributions and the required minimum costs.
- Coercion is avoided by clearly stating that activities require a voluntary contribution and parents are not repeatedly asked for contributions.
- The school reserves the right to cancel activities if insufficient funds are received from voluntary contributions.



Remissions and help with charges

- The school will publish a Remissions Statement that sets out when charges will be reduced or waived. The governing body delegates the responsibility for approving remissions to the Finance Committee.
- Remissions will be considered for:
 - Pupils in receipt of free school meals (or whose parents are in receipt of qualifying benefits).
 - Families in receipt of certain benefits (list per DfE guidance) or in severe financial hardship.
 - Situations where charging would place a family in hardship and would prevent a child's participation.
- For residential trips where charges apply for board and lodging, children of parents on qualifying benefits may be eligible for full or partial remission.
- Requests for remissions will be treated confidentially and sympathetically. Solutions may include staged payments, part subsidies, or use of Pupil Premium or school funds where permitted.

Payment, debt recovery and refunds

- Payment methods: The school will accept payments online via Arbor Pay. Receipts will be provided.
- Payment deadlines must be clearly communicated. Where payments are overdue, the school will contact parents promptly to agree a payment plan.
- The school will follow the local authority and diocesan guidance on write-offs and debt recovery. Governors will be informed of significant outstanding debts.
- Refunds: Where activities are cancelled or a pupil cannot attend, refunds will be handled in line with the school's financial procedures. If a non-refundable booking was made (e.g., coach), the school will seek to recover costs and may offer a partial refund.
- Non-payment for activities will be reviewed by Senior Leaders as detailed above.
- Refunds will only be given when the school cancels activities.



Communication and transparency

- The school will:
 - Publish this policy on the website and make a paper copy available on request.
 - Provide clear information for each chargeable activity: purpose, breakdown of costs, voluntary or compulsory, payment deadlines and remissions options.
 - Use letters, emails and the school's communications platforms to ensure parents understand what is expected.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

- The governing body will review the policy annually, taking account of changes to legislation, diocesan guidance and local needs.
- The finance assistant will produce termly reports to leaders and governors showing:
 - Income from charges.
 - Number and value of remissions.
 - Outstanding debts.
 - Impact on pupil access and participation.
- The policy will be evaluated for equality impact, ensuring it does not discriminate and that it supports children with SEND and disadvantaged pupils effectively.

Inclusion, SEND and equality considerations

- The school will ensure charging and remissions arrangements do not disadvantage pupils with SEND or those from vulnerable backgrounds.
- Reasonable adjustments, additional support or subsidised places will be made where necessary so that activities are accessible to all.
- The school will proactively identify pupils who may need support to participate and will use available funding (e.g., Pupil Premium) within legal allowances to facilitate this.



Specific arrangements for Pre-School and Early Years

- The Pre-School will:
 - Publish charges for non-funded hours and clearly explain funded entitlements (2-, 3- and 4-year-old funding).
 - Align charging practice to statutory early years funding rules and local authority guidance.
 - Ensure planned Pre-School activities that prepare children for Reception are not impeded by fee structures.
- Funded hours and additional hours are charged at the same rate.

Record keeping and data protection

- The school will keep accurate records of consent, payments, remissions and communications in line with data protection requirements. Confidential financial information relating to remissions will be handled sensitively and securely.

Complaints

- Parents who are unhappy with a charging/remissions decision should follow the school's complaints procedure (published separately). The school will handle complaints in a timely and fair manner.

Templates and annexes

- Charging schedule template for wrap-around care, pre-school, trips and meals.
- Remissions application form (confidential).
- Letter templates for requesting voluntary contributions and consent for trips.

Implementation checklist for school leaders

- Publish the policy on the school website and in the school office.
- Ensure staff and governors are briefed on the policy and delegated responsibilities.
- Create a published charging schedule for the academic year.
- Prepare remissions application forms and a confidential process.
- Set up monitoring reports for governors and leaders.
- Ensure Pre-School charging aligns with statutory funding rules and the Reception curriculum.



Audit and governance

- The finance committee will review annual reports relating to income from charges, remissions claimed, outstanding debts and impact on participation.
- The full governing body will ratify any significant changes to charging structures or remissions criteria.

Policy review

- This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if statutory guidance changes. The review will ensure compliance with the latest DfE guidance and diocesan rules and will consider feedback from staff, parents and governors.

Useful references

- Education Act 1996 (sections 449–462)
- DfE guidance: Charging for school activities
- SEND Code of Practice
- Relevant diocesan guidance and local authority policy

Policy links and associated documents

- Pupil Premium Strategy
- EYFS Policy
- Educational Visit Policy
- Equality Policy