



St Clement and St James  
CE Primary School

Charging Policy  
March 2017

## St Clement & St James CE Primary School Charging Policy

### Our vision

*St Clement and St James is a school with Christian values at its heart. We are proud of its history and our strong links with the vibrant community to which we belong. We welcome and celebrate every child, helping all children to develop their character and full academic potential. We promote high aspirations and a love of learning through a rich and varied curriculum.*

*Our school values are compassion, creativity, excellence, friendship, forgiveness and thankfulness. These values help us show and grow love, faith and hope, which are at the heart of the school and are defined by 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.*

### Purpose

We believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra curricular), independent of their parents' financial means. This charging policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities. The policy has been informed by *A Guide to the Law for School Governors*.

### Relationship to other school policies

The policy complements the school's equality policy, curriculum policy and educational visits policy.

### Roles and responsibilities

#### **HEADTEACHER, OTHER STAFF AND GOVERNORS**

The headteacher, staff and governors will ensure that the following applies:

##### **1. No charges will be made for**

- 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; part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education
- any educational visit that takes place during school hours
- any educational visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of the school's curriculum for religious education
- transport provided in connection with the above categories.

A reasonable voluntary contribution will be invited for educational visits where costs are incurred.

## **2. Activities for which charges may be made**

### *a) Activities outside school hours*

Non-residential activities (other than those listed in 1 above) which take place outside school hours and are extra to the National Curriculum.

### *b) Residential activities*

Board and lodging costs (but only those costs) of residential trips deemed to take place during school time. However, pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits (see point 3 below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs.

Residential trips deemed to take place outside school time (other than for those activities listed in 1 above).

#### *Is a residential trip in or out of school time?*

If the number of school sessions on a residential trip is equal to or greater than 50 percent of the number of half days spent on the trip it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. A "half day" means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

When any trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places.

### *c) Music tuition*

Music tuition for individuals or groups of up to four pupils.

Charges will be made for instrumental tuition (eg keyboard or violin). These charges are subsidised by the school. Parental agreement will be obtained before a charge is made, and before any increase in charges.

d) Activities which can be charged for (with the exception of board and lodging for residential trips) are regarded as "optional extras". Charges will not exceed the actual cost (per pupil) of provision.

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Activity or thing which will or may be charged for	Notes	Remitted or help available
Charges will/may be made for any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, <i>where a parent wishes their child to own them</i>	For example, a clay model – a charge to cover the cost of the clay.	
Charges will/may be made for music tuition	The cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide extra group (maximum 4 pupils) or individual tuition in playing a musical instrument or singing	<i>Currently subsidised by governors' trust fund</i>
Charges will be made for the board and lodging component of residential trips	The charge will not exceed the actual cost	<i>See below for remissions. Currently subsidised by school and governors' trust fund.</i>

### 3. Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. If remission or help is available in relation to a particular charge it is indicated in the right hand column of the table above.

Children who qualify for free school meals may be subsidised. The governing body delegates responsibility to the Headteacher to use his/her discretion to agree a subsidy with parents and carers in other comparable circumstances. Parents are encouraged to meet privately with the Headteacher to agree a reasonable and fair subsidy. The governors recognise that it is important that pupils do not miss out on the opportunities enjoyed by their peers, because of family financial constraints.

### 4. Additional considerations

The governing body recognises its responsibility to ensure that the offer of activities and educational visits does not place an unnecessary burden on family finances. To this end we will try to adhere to the following guidelines:

- where possible we shall publish a list of visits (and their approximate cost) at the beginning of the school year so that parents can plan ahead

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- we have established a system for parents to pay in instalments
- when an opportunity for a trip arises at short notice it will be possible to arrange to pay by instalments beyond the date of the trip
- we acknowledge that offering opportunities on a “first pay, first served” basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.

### 5. Debt recovery

When a parent or carer is in debt for residential trips (board and lodging), a payment plan is agreed as noted in section 4.

We request that parents and carers pay for music tuition in advance, and a letter is sent at the beginning of each half term with the amount due. If no payment is received within two weeks, a reminder letter is sent. If a debt mounts to £30 (six lessons), the parent or carer is informed that the lessons will stop until the debt is cleared.

We request that parents and carers pay for school meals in advance. When a parent is in debt for two weeks of school meals, a reminder letter is generated by SIMS with the amount due. If there is no response and the debt continues to grow, after one further week a phone call is made by the Administration Officer or the Receptionist. To help families who may be in financial need, a repayment plan is agreed where this is appropriate. If no payments towards the debt are made after a further two weeks, the Headteacher follows up with the parent either in person or by phone.

Any debts which are written off are reported to the subsequent meeting of the Finance and Premises Committee. The amount and the reason for writing off the debt are reported.

### Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The Finance Committee of the governing body will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving on a regular basis a financial report on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, the subsidies awarded (without giving names) and the source of those subsidies. It will seek to evaluate the impact of the school's extended services on those children most in need of additional support.

**Date established by governing body: 11<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

**Last reviewed and agreed by governing body: 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017**

**Signed by Chair of Governors and Headteacher:**

