



# **St Gregory's Catholic Primary School** **Charging Policy**

## Introduction

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that there is clarity over those items which the school will provide free of charge and for those items where there may be a charge. This policy is subject to the Law which was set out in the Education Act 1996: Sections 449–462. Any changes in Law could over rule this policy. The policy will be maintained to comply with changes in the Law. The ninth edition of *A Guide to the Law for School Governors* dated June 2007 was used in preparing this policy.

## Definitions

The school day is:

as defined in the School Prospectus. The midday break does not form part of the school day.

Eligible Benefits are:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 ;
- Child Tax Credit (providing that they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, assessed by the Inland Revenue, that does not exceed £14,495\* for the year 2007-8);
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit.

*\* This amount changes annually, the current annual amount will apply.*

Standard Education is:

the education provided by the school to meet the needs of the National Curriculum, Religious Education or other parts of the syllabus defined by the school to be necessary for a full and rounded primary education.

School Delegated Education Budget is:

the financial budget delegated by government (central and local) to the school governors. The ways that this budget can be spent is prescribed in law and is described in the guide to the law mentioned in the introduction. In summary

the governors will control the spend of this budget to ensure it is only spent on things for the educational benefit of the schools' pupils.

### School Funds are:

all the monies that the school has from all sources except the School Delegated Education Budget and money devolved from government for capital projects (Devolved Capital).

### **Head teacher**

The term Head teacher is used throughout this policy, meaning the Head teacher or the Deputy Head teacher if the Head teacher is absent.

### **Responsibilities**

- The Head teacher will advise parents of charges / voluntary contribution amounts well in advance of any activity requiring them.
- Parents who are having financial difficulties in meeting charges levied by the school should alert the Head teacher to their difficulties.
- The Head teacher will require proof that a family is in receipt of Eligible Benefits when a family claims that this is the case.
- Governors will consider how to help financial hardship cases brought to their attention by the Head teacher. Families will not be identified to them.
- The Governors will review this policy every three years.

### **Policy**

#### **Activities within the school day**

- During the school day all activities which are part of the Standard Education will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take pupils between the school and the activity.
- Charges may be made for activities which are not part of the Standard Education. This includes teaching either an individual pupil, or groups of up to four pupils, to play a musical instrument.
- Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs. This may include activities which are part of the Standard Education. In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution.

- If insufficient funds are available it maybe necessary to curtail or cancel activities.

### **Optional activities outside of the school day**

- School may charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example, school clubs, sports activities, theatre trips. Such activities are normally not part of the Standard Education.

### **Standard Education partly during the school day**

- If a non-residential activity happens partly inside the school day and partly outside of it, there will be no charge if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the school day.
- Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal school day, charges may be made.

### **Residential Activities**

- If a residential activity takes place largely during school time and is determined by school to be part of the Standard Education, no charge will be made either for the education or for the cost of travel.
- Charges will be made for board and lodging, except for pupils whose parents are in receipt of Eligible Benefits.

### **Calculating charges**

- Charges made for any activity, whether during the school day or not, will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating.
- There will be no levy on those who can contribute to support those who are exempt or those who can't or won't contribute.
- If sufficient funds are not available, from all sources, to cover the cost of the activity it maybe necessary to curtail or cancel it.

### **Parent Communications**

- The Headteacher will advise parents well in advance of any planned activity which will require charges or voluntary contributions.
- Letters to parents will contain the appropriate standard text from the Appendix to this policy.
- Parents may see the calculations of charges for specific events if they wish.

## **Financial Hardship**

- The governors desire that no child will miss out on an event because of financial hardship, though this can not be guaranteed.
- Priority for financial support will be given to those families who are in receipt of Eligible Benefits. The source of funds to support these families will be the School Delegated Education Budget.
- Families who are excluded from being in receipt of an Eligible Benefit through being entitled to Working Tax Credit may be given financial support. This will be at the discretion of the Head teacher who will make the decision based on proof provided by the family and knowledge of their situation. The source of funds to support these families will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising such as income from third party organisations but not from the School Delegated Education Budget.

## **Financial support may be provided for other families.**

- Financial support may be authorised by the Head teacher up to a limit of £50 per pupil per year. An example might be to cover the cost of theatre trips.
- Above £50 the Head teacher will seek authorisation from chair of governors and the chair of the finance committee. The decision will be at the sole discretion of the governors based on the advice of the Head teacher. An example might be for music tuition for pupils who the Head teacher advises will benefit from such tuition. The Head teacher will not provide names of families.
- The source of funds for this category of support will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising such as income from third party organisations but not from the School Delegated Education Budget.

## **Distribution of Limited Funds**

- Each year the governors will endeavour to agree with the Local Authority a Delegated Education Budget that will be sufficient to cover the forecast cost of full support for families in receipt of Eligible Benefits.
- Where funds, of whichever source, are insufficient to cover the cost of an event and meet the approved claims for financial support from families one of the following courses may be taken:
- The Head teacher may curtail or cancel the event concerned.

- Partial support funds will be offered to the families being supported, the level of support for each pupil affected will be the same. If this shortfall causes a family to withdraw their child or children from an event the Head teacher will alert the chair of governors and the chair of the finance committee who will review the situation with the Head teacher.

### **Third Parties use of School Facilities**

When school facilities are let out, for the use of third parties for their own purposes, a fee will be charged which goes directly into School Funds. All hirers must show proof of insurance cover for their activity as well as public liability cover, this will protect the school.

School regularly allows third parties (e.g. the school photographer) to use the school facilities to provide a chargeable service to pupils and or parents. The school may charge the third party a fee which goes directly into School Funds. The decision to charge or not will be based on the educational value of the service.

<b>Member of staff/link governor responsible:</b>	<b>Jeremy Tidman</b>
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