

**THOMAS OF CANTERBURY FEDERATION OF NORTHAMPTON  
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS  
CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY**

**1. Introduction**

This policy has been compiled in line with Northamptonshire County Council Charging and Remissions Policy Guidance 2009 and in accordance with sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996.

All education provided during normal school hours is provided free of charge. With the exception of individual or small group music tuition, no charge is made for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum or statutory RE Curriculum. Charges may be made for optional activities provided wholly or mainly outside of school hours or to enhance the learning experience. The school may invite parents/carers to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of these activities.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents/carers.

**2. Voluntary contributions**

When organising school trips or activities to enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school could invite parents/carers to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost. No child will be excluded from the trip or activity simply because their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. No child will be treated differently from any others.

If insufficient voluntary contributions are received the activity/trip may be cancelled. Sometimes the school pays additional costs in order to support the trip or activity. Parents/carers have the right to know how each trip or activity is funded. The school can provide this information on request.

Activities organised by the school which require voluntary contributions from parents/carers could include visits to museums, outdoor adventure activities, visits to or by a theatre company, sporting activities requiring transport, musical events.

**3. Residential visits**

If the school organises a residential visit a charge is made to cover the costs of any activities, board and lodging and travel expenses. If parents/carers are experiencing financial difficulty they are invited to speak in confidence to the Headteacher. When the school informs parents/carers about a forthcoming visit, it is made clear that parents/carers who can prove that they are in receipt of certain benefits, as defined by the Department for Education, will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging. (See Remissions Policy Section 11)

**4. Requests for refunds of trip money paid**

This will be considered on a case by case basis. Every attempt will be made to accommodate the request that should be made in writing to the Head teacher. Where admission charges reflect the cost of children attending on that day a refund may be possible for reasons of non-attendance, although transport costs may still apply.

## **5. Music tuition**

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. No charge is made for this.

There is a charge for music instrument tuition whether students are taught individually or in small groups where this is not part of the National Curriculum. These individual or small group lessons are taught by peripatetic music teachers. Information regarding music tuition is provided at the start of each academic year and parents/carers wishing their child to take part in such lessons will be requested to sign an agreement covering the full academic year and to make payment a term in advance before the child is permitted to attend any lessons.

A 50% discount is available to parents/carers whose children are in receipt of free school meals. All parents/carers are required to purchase any music books required for these lessons and pay for any examination fees.

## **6. Swimming Lessons**

Where the School organises swimming lessons, these take place in school time and are part of the national Curriculum therefore no charge is made. Written permission will be sought from parents/carers for their child to take part in this activity.

## **7. Activities Outside School Hours**

Schools run a number of optional after school clubs. No charge will be made for children attending school clubs organised and run by school staff where they are part of the National Curriculum or religious education programme. For all other optional extra-curricular activities outside of normal school hours, provided by external clubs (ie sports coaches) a charge up to the cost of the activity will be levied. These are paid for directly by parents/carers.

## **8. Breakfast Club**

There is a charge for children attending a Breakfast Club where provided by individual schools within the Federation.

## **9. School Meals**

There is a charge for meals provided by the School at lunch time. However parents/carers meeting the qualifying criteria as stated by Northamptonshire County Council for free school meals who would like to apply, should contact the School attended by their child for further details.

## **10. Materials and Textbooks**

Where a pupil or parent/carer wishes to retain items produced as a result of art, craft and design or a finished technology project, a charge may be levied for the cost of the materials used. This also includes activities offered outside normal school hours.

Textbooks are provided free of charge.

## **11. Remissions Policy**

Where a trip takes place wholly or mainly during school hours, the school offers to support children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments **in addition to having free school meal entitlement:**

- Income Support,
- Income based Jobseekers' Allowance,
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (providing that they do not also receive Working Tax Credit and have an annual income that does not exceed £16,040)
- Guaranteed State Pension Credit

A similar entitlement applies where the trip takes place outside school hours but is necessary as part of the National Curriculum or statutory RE curriculum.

The Head Teacher, Finance & Staffing Committee or Governing Body may remit in full or part charges in respect of a pupil, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

The Head Teacher, Finance & Staffing Committee or Governing Body may decide not to levy charges in respect of a particular activity, if it feels it is reasonable in the circumstances.

## **11. Damage/Loss to property**

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, breakages, neglect or loss of school property, including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials. The charge will be equal to the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide.

The school accepts no liability for the loss or accidental damage to third party property.

## **12. Examinations**

Normally the School pays fees for all students who enter for public examinations. However, parents may be asked to repay part or all fees if any of the following circumstances apply:

- If the student fails to sit the examination without reasonable cause, e.g. medically certified sickness (if no medical certificate is given, a charge will be made.)
- If the student fails to attend School for the necessary course of study.
- If the student fails to submit the necessary course work by the correct date.
- Where parents and student want a re-mark.
- The cost of re-taking an examination will also be charged to parents.
- The invoice for re-taking examinations must be paid before the student is entered for the examination.

## **13. Lettings**

Please refer to the Lettings Policy

**14. Mini Buses**

A Mini Bus service is available to students attending Thomas Becket Catholic School for which a charge is made on a per term basis. Parents/Carers are invited to contact the school for further information.

**15. Other charges**

The Head Teacher and/or the Finance and Staffing committee of the Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services, for example solicitors' letters, OFSTED reports, or any information requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

**16. School Hardship Fund**

Each School has a Hardship Fund that can be used in extreme cases of hardship for parents/carers in funding school uniform. Please contact, in confidence, the School Finance Officer your child attends for the qualifying procedure.

**17. Policy Review**

This policy is reviewed annually and to reflect changes in legislation.