



# ST THOMAS

## CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Charging & Remissions Policy 2022-2024

Policy reviewed on:	September 2022
Policy approved by the Governing Body on:	September 2022
Policy is due for review no later than:	September 2024

## **Introduction**

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum. This policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed annually or earlier if necessary.

## **Definition**

- Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

## **Rationale**

The Governing Body of St Thomas CE (VC) Primary School believe that all our children should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curricular and extra-curricular) independent of their parents' financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure that a good range of visits and activities are offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some children taking full advantage of the opportunities.

The 1996 Education Act requires all schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, which will be kept under regular review. The review date for this policy is recorded on the final page.

The policy identifies activities for which:

- charges will not be made
- charges will be made
- charges may be waived

## **Equal Opportunities**

St Thomas CE (VC) Primary School is committed to equal opportunities for all pupils.

We believe that all pupils should be allowed to take a full part in the life of the school regardless of their race, gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexuality (including sexual orientation), age, religion and belief.

## **Prohibition of Charges**

*The Governing Body of the School recognises that legislation prohibits charges for the following:*

- 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- education provided on any educational visit that takes place during school hours;
- education provided on any educational visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of religious education;
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip;

- transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local education authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport;
- transporting registered pupils or other premises where the governing body or local education authority has arranged for pupils to be educated;
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

*The Governing Body of the School recognises that legislation allows charges for the following:*

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see below)

Optional Extras:

- 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; c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport that is not 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 where the charge will not exceed the actual cost.

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

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It will not 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. Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is a necessary prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

### **Swimming**

The school will organise swimming lessons for all children in a targeted year group. These will take place in school time and will be part of the National Curriculum. We will not make a charge for this activity. We will inform parents when these lessons will take place.

### **Voluntary Contributions**

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the School Governing Body from inviting parents to make voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or in support of any school activity, whether during or outside school hours. Any contributions sought will be entirely voluntary and children will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents make a contribution in response to any invitation.

### **Breakages and Damage to School Property**

The school may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents. Parents will only be charged the replacement cost to purchase the same or equivalent item. The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

### **The school will charge for the following activities:**

- Use of the school as a polling station
- Use of the school as a breakfast and after school club provision

### **Remissions Policy**

Those parents in receipt of one or more of the credits below may be offered assistance in paying for the trip or a longer period of instalments will be made available to enable their child to access the activity:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get). The Governors recognise the value that extra curricula activities have for all children.

### **School Trip Refunds**

All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a school trip is cancelled by a party other than the school due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents.

In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

Where a pupil or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school will have the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits.

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it will be at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it will be at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1 per pupil.

The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they will be able to do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

### **Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme**

The school's Freedom of Information Policy and Freedom of Information Publication Scheme will set out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.

*If lack of finance prevents your child attending an event, parents are encouraged to speak in confidence to the Headteacher.*