



Charging and Remissions Policy

Purpose of Policy

We believe all 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 and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

In accordance with the Education Reform Act of 1988 and in accordance with Sections 449 - 462 of the Education Act 1996 no charges are made to pupils of Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College for any books, materials, equipment or apparatus used during school hours. In line with Section 457 of the Education Act 1996 charges will normally be made for residential school trips and artefacts made in school and taken home.

Questions and queries about this policy or discussions regarding the application of this policy can be made to the Headteacher.

Relationship to other policies

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

Details of where charges can and cannot be made

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

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, or 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
- Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments (or singing) if the tuition is required as part of the National Curriculum
- Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours. However, Governors have agreed that Voluntary Contributions may be requested
- Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum or part of the school's religious education provision. However, Governors have agreed that Voluntary Contributions may be requested
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip

- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip. However, Governors have agreed that Voluntary Contributions may be requested.

Activities for which charges may be made:

- Non-residential activities (other than those listed in 1 above), which take place outside school hours, but only if the majority of the time spent on that activity takes place outside school hours (time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours)
- 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 state 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). When any trip is arranged parents will be notified of the policy for allocating places.
- Music tuition – for individuals or groups if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus
- Examination entries:
 - a charge will be levied in respect of examination entries for pupils where the school has not prepared the pupil for the examination
 - a charge will be levied in respect of examination entries for pupils where the school has prepared the pupil for the examination and it considers that for educational reasons the pupil should not be entered and the pupil's parent/carer wishes the pupil to be entered (or the pupil him/herself when over 18 years old). In these circumstances, if the pupil subsequently passes the examination, the school may refund the cost
 - a charge will be levied where a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the school paid or agreed to pay the entry fee. The charge levied will be limited to the cost of the examination entry plus any administrative fee
- Damage/loss to property:
 - a charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, or loss of school property. The charge will be the cost of replacement or repair
- Optional extras can include:
 - costs incurred in relation to the purchase of materials, books or equipment, buildings and accommodation, non-teaching staff or teachers/tutors engaged solely to provide optional extra support.
- Community facilities

Families qualifying for remission or help with charges for school activities

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that some activities and visits will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances.

A pupil will qualify for this assistance if he/she is in receipt of free school meals. To check qualifying conditions for free school meals, view the government website or <https://www.entitledto.co.uk/help/free-school-meals>

Other qualifying remission criteria is outlined below:

Parents / Carer is in receipt of:

- Universal Credit, provided your annual net earned income does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules
- Income support
- Income based jobseekers allowance
- Support under part VI of the immigration and asylum act 1999
- Incapacity Allowance
- Child Tax Credit, provided that working tax credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed the sum given in the Revenue and Customs rules
- State pension Guaranteed Credit
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

Parents / Carers may qualify for additional categories to claim help with some costs in some circumstances, which will be decided by the governing body taking into account as to whether additional help is justified.

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
- 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 recognise that offering opportunities on a “first pay, first served” basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will try to avoid that method of selection.