

Maria Fidelis Catholic School FCJ

Charging and Remissions Policy



Vision Statement

The vision for Maria Fidelis is to create an inclusive school equipped for the 21st Century which will enable all young people to maximise their potential in order that they leave school as educated, confident and courageous Catholics, prepared to challenge injustice and care enough to 'live life to the full'.

Purpose and Background

At Maria Fidelis, we wish to make a broad programme of activities accessible to as many pupils as possible. This policy is intended to maintain a fair and coherent system of charges and remissions within the constraints of the school budget. It also defines other circumstances when the school may wish to ask for voluntary contributions, how these charges will be worked out and who might qualify for help with the costs.

The policy is written to comply with the relevant terms of:

- The Education Act 1996;
- The Education (School Sessions and Charges and Remissions Policies) (Information) (England) Regulations 1999; and
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010.

It also references the 'Charging for School Activities' guidance produced by the Department for Education.

We believe that all its 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 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 at the end of the document.

The policy identifies activities for which:

- Charges will not be made;
- Charges will be made;
- Charges may be waived.

Voluntary contributions

Separately from the matter of charging, schools may always seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide variety of experience to pupils. All requests for voluntary contributions will emphasise their voluntary nature and the fact that pupils of parents who do not make such contributions will be treated no differently from those who have.

The Law says:

If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions the parents will be notified of this from the outset.

- No child will be excluded from an activity because parents are unable to pay.
- If insufficient contributions are raised, the trip or activity may have to be cancelled.
- If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay their child will be given an equal chance to go on the visit.

No charges will be made for:

1. Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
2. 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;

3. Tuition for pupils learning to play musical instruments (or singing) 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;
4. Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school*;
5. Examination re-sit(s)* if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school;
6. Education provided on any trip that takes place during school hours;
7. Education provided on any trip that takes place outside school hours (a) if it is part of the National Curriculum, or (b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or (c) part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education.
8. Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.

*If a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, a charge will be made.

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 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).

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 remissions policy below) may not be charged for board and lodging costs.

c) Music tuition

Music tuition for individuals or groups of up to 4 pupils.

d) Public Examinations

- i) The Headteacher has the delegated responsibility to decide whether pupils are entered into particular examinations.
- ii) The Headteacher has the authority to charge for examination entries in certain circumstances.
- iii) The Headteacher is authorised to request payment for wasted examination fees.

e) Loss and Damage to School Property

Parents of a pupil who damages or loses any item of school property or equipment, including, for example, windows or computer software, are liable for the costs of repair or replacement.

f) Materials

The cost of materials or ingredients for design and technology and food technology, if parents/carers have indicated in advance that they wish to own the final product.

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.

Families qualifying for remission or help with charges

- a) Pupils on Free School Meals;
- b) Parents in receipt of Income Support.

Freedom of Information Act

Freedom of Information Act requests will be considered and dealt with on a case by case basis. The school reserves the right to charge reasonable expenses where legally allowed and financially justifiable.

Hire of School Premises

A charge will normally be made for the use of the school's accommodation and facilities. For details, availability and charges, the school office should be contacted by email: office@mariafidelis.camden.sch.uk

Other Fees payable include

- A search fee of £10 per certificate will be levied for requests for all examination certificates not collected in the year in which they are awarded;
- Subject to the restrictions of the Data Protection Act a fee of £50 will be charged for copies of an individual's school record.
- Ex students/external candidates wanting to take examinations at the school will be charged the cost of sitting the exam plus a 10% administration fee. The base cost will include the exam entry fee and invigilation.
- Charges may also apply in respect to Freedom of Information requests.