



St. Comgall's Primary School
23 Brunswick Road
Bangor
Co. Down
BT20 3DS

St Comgall's Primary School, Bangor **Charging and Remissions Policy**

Introduction

St Comgall's Primary School recognises the value of providing a wide range of experiences to enrich and extend pupils' learning and to contribute to their personal development.

The Principal and Governors aim to promote and provide such experiences for the pupils of the school, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities.

However, many of these activities have an associated cost and cannot be provided unless voluntary contributions are received or parents are charged for the cost. This is particularly relevant at this very challenging financial time for schools.

This policy will set out the circumstances in which charges will or will not be made for school activities and when charges may be waived in order to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to benefit from school visits, curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Where 'parent' is referred to this will include adults with a responsibility for the pupil.

We aim:-

- To make school activities accessible to all pupils regardless of family income
- To encourage and promote external activities which give added value to the curriculum
- To respond to the wide variations in family income while not adding additional unexpected burdens to the school budget.

Legislation – Educational During School Hours

The DE in its guidance to School Governors states that "education provided during school hours must be free. The definition of "education" includes materials, equipment and transport (travel to/from school outside of regulation distance and travel to curricular activities such as swimming) provided in school hours by school to carry pupils between the school and an activity."

It goes on to advise that "although schools cannot charge for school time activities, they can still invite parents and others to make voluntary contributions (in cash or in kind)"

When additional costs are incurred by St Comgall's Primary School to enhance the curriculum opportunities for the pupils, parents may be requested to make voluntary contributions. However, no pupil will be left out of an activity because his or her parents cannot make a contribution of any kind.

Charges at Grant aided schools <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/de-circular-199121-education-reform-ni-order-1989-charges-grant-aided-schools>



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Education Outside School Hours

The DE in its guidance to School Governors states that “Parents can only be charged for activities that happen outside school hours when these activities are not a necessary part of the national curriculum or religious education.

No charge can be made for activities that are an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination. Charges may be made for other activities that happen outside school hours if parents agree to pay. The provision of additional ‘*Before*’ and ‘*After*’ school activities are charged as “optional extras”.

Remissions

To ensure that access to activities reflects intentions, St Comgall’s Primary School will implement the following Remissions Policy.

The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that all pupils gain fully from everything that the school is able to offer them and is based on an understanding of the relationship between low income, entitlement and access.

This policy takes into account the very real and persistent difficulties which people on low income have in meeting the costs of educational activities for their children.

There may be cases of family hardship which make it difficult for pupils to take part in other particular activities for which a charge is made.

When arranging a chargeable activity the Principal will invite parents to apply in confidence for the remission of charges in part or in full. Authorisation of remission will be made by the Principal/Vice-Principal in consultation with the Chair of Governors. School reserve the right to vary and/or waiver costs if appropriate.

Data Protection of pupils and families

Teachers will ensure that children are never publicly identified or stigmatised.

This is particularly important as the fear of stigmatisation is often a key element in the non-take up of Free School Meals.

This will be accomplished by developing methods of collecting voluntary charges or dinner money, which do not seek to infringe upon the rights of children who cannot contribute. SchoolMoney online payments has removed the need for children to bring cash into school and is a confidential system between the school office and home.

Voluntary Contributions towards the School Fund / PTA Fund may be requested at the start of each academic year through the PTA or Parent/Carer Info Pack. Parents are always given various payment options.

Contributions

Voluntary contributions may also be requested to help with providing additional learning activities even though they may take part during the normal school day or as part of the National Curriculum.

If voluntary contributions are requested for an activity it should be clearly understood that there is no obligation to contribute and that if the parent is unable to pay, the child will not be excluded from the activity.



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Charges:

The School reserves the right to request payment for the activities and items detailed below:

- School Trips where entrance, specialist leaders and/or transport costs are incurred and other trips occurring beyond and outside the school day (i.e. Weekends or residential)
- Transport to venues for specific groups
- Healthy Snack provision
- Before & After School Clubs
- Music tuition that is provided for an individual pupil or for groups of pupils at parents' requests.
- Instruments or hire of instruments
- Entry costs for public examinations or competitions e.g. Speech & Drama Festival, Certification of Awards eg Music/Swimming/Gymnastics Badges etc
- Damage to school property - the cost of replacing any item, such as a broken window or defaced, damaged or lost book, where this is a result of a pupil's behaviour.
- Additional activities of pupil interest e.g. Workshops, Theatre Group Productions
- Visits to school by external professionals e.g. Authors, storytellers, musicians, dancers, artists, sports coaches etc.
- Use of specialist tutors or coaches to enhance provision beyond staff capabilities
- Damage to school books (Reading scheme)

Individual Music Tuition

Charges may be made to parents for individual tuition in playing any musical instrument, even if such tuition takes place during school hours. Parental agreement will be obtained before the tuition is provided.

Ingredients or Materials for Practical Subjects

Parents are encouraged to provide ingredients, materials, etc. needed for practical subjects such as Science projects, Technology or Cookery. (Mainly Post-Primary related)

Lost School Equipment, Books etc

Parents will be expected to replace or pay for the cost of loss or damage to items of School property.

Breakages and Damage to School Buildings, Furniture or Property

Parents will be charged for damage caused as a result of a pupil's wilful behaviour.

Residential Trips

These are normally reserved for Primary Seven pupils to mark the end of their primary education. These trips are completely optional. Parents are consulted and asked to sign a contract to incur the relevant costs. Children not wishing to participate may remain within school as normal.

Photocopying

Any photocopying that is requested by parents relating to their child, under the 'Freedom of Information Act', or 'GDPR SAR' will be charged at 10p per sheet and 20p for any colour printing. Requests for additional study materials will also incur costs.

Additional Paperwork Requests

Parents wishing to have Passport, Driving Licence, Tax Benefit or other forms of documentation requiring principal's witness, signature and information may be asked to make a contribution which will be used to support the School Fund.

Policy reviewed:

Review Date:

Review Date:

April 2017

April 2019

April 2021

C Hunter

C Hunter – SchoolMoney added*



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