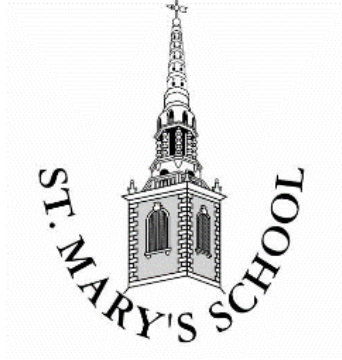




Charging and Remissions Policy

Policy Agreed: 23rd September 2026

Review date: Autumn 2027

(Interim) Executive Head Teacher: Anthony David

Chair of Governors: Rebecca Shilling

We believe that everyone is precious and loved by God. We aspire to let our light shine in all that we do. We nurture and empower one another to flourish. Together we shine in our world by showing compassion and by serving others. Let God's light shine through us.

Our calling

“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” (John 10:10)

Education at St Mary’s is, by law and by conviction, free during school hours. No child is ever excluded from a school activity because their family cannot make a financial contribution. This policy sets out clearly when we may invite voluntary contributions, what we may charge for, and what is always provided without cost.

Status of this document

This policy is required by statute. It is published on the school website in the statutory information section and is available in hard copy on request. It applies to all activities undertaken by St Mary’s CofE Primary School during the academic year 2026–2027 and takes effect from the date of approval by the Governing Body.

1. Our Vision and Principles

St Mary’s is a Church of England primary school. Our vision is rooted in the words of Jesus: “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10). Every child in our care is a unique, precious child of God.

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” (Matthew 25:40)

This policy sets out our approach to charging and remissions for activities and services provided by the school. It is grounded in the law and in our conviction that no child should ever miss out on the life of the school because their family cannot make a financial contribution. We have a duty to be transparent about what we may charge for, what we cannot charge for, and how we ensure that families experiencing financial hardship can participate fully.

1.1 Our five principles

1. Education during school hours is free.

This is the law and it is also our conviction. The school does not charge for education provided during the normal school day. Where a charge is permitted by law, we apply it transparently and only when the activity is genuinely additional to the curriculum.

2. No child is excluded because of family finances.

Where we ask for voluntary contributions, no child is treated differently if their family does not contribute. Remissions are available where they apply by law, and the school exercises discretion to support families experiencing hardship.

3. We are transparent.

We tell parents clearly what we may charge for, what we are inviting voluntary contributions for, and what is provided free of charge. We do not disguise charges and we do not pressure families.

4. We are realistic.

Activities such as residential trips and educational visits depend on adequate funding. We are honest with parents about the costs and about what happens if voluntary contributions are insufficient.

5. We treat every family with dignity.

Discussions about hardship, remission, or unpaid amounts are conducted privately and respectfully. No family is shamed or stigmatised.

2. Status and Scope

2.1 Status

This policy is approved by the Governing Body of St Mary's CofE Primary School and is published on the school website. The Education Act 1996 (sections 449-462) and the School Information (England) Regulations 2008 (as amended) require maintained schools to maintain and publish a written statement on charging and remissions. This policy fulfils that requirement.

2.2 Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to:

- All pupils on roll at St Mary's, including pupils in our Reception classes, and Key Stages 1 and 2
- All activities organised by, or under the auspices of, the school during and outside the school day
- All staff who organise activities or arrange for goods and services on behalf of the school
- All parents and carers
- Any external providers offering services through the school (e.g. peripatetic music teachers, after-school club operators, trip operators)

2.3 Where this policy does not apply

- Wraparound care provided by external operators not under the school's direction (governed by separate contracts between operator and family)
- Education provided by the LA outside the school setting under Section 19 (covered by the Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy)
- Statutory examination fees - none apply at primary level (KS2 SATs are free)
- Charges levied by external providers using the school's premises outside school hours under separate hire arrangements

2.4 Related policies

- Pupil Premium Strategy
- Free School Meals Policy / arrangements

- Equality Policy and Information
- Educational Visits Policy
- Behaviour Policy (relevant to charges for damage)
- Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices
- Complaints Procedure
- School Uniform Policy
- Wraparound Care arrangements (Breakfast Club / After-School Club)
- Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy

3. Legal Framework

3.1 Principal legislation

- Education Act 1996, sections 449-462 - the principal statutory framework
- Section 451 - prohibition on charging for education during school hours
- Section 452 - exceptions to the prohibition (residential trips, music tuition for individuals or small groups, education outside school hours that is not part of the syllabus)
- Section 453 - charging for education provided wholly or mainly outside school hours
- Section 454 - prohibition on charging for materials, books, instruments and equipment used during school hours
- Section 455 - voluntary contributions are explicitly permitted
- Section 457 - statutory duty to maintain a written statement on charging and remissions
- School Information (England) Regulations 2008 (as amended) - publication requirements
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010 - prohibition on discrimination in the provision of services

3.2 Statutory and departmental guidance

- DfE: Charging for school activities (departmental advice, current version)
- DfE: Statutory policies for schools and academy trusts
- DfE: Wraparound care guidance
- LDBS guidance for Voluntary Aided Church of England schools
- LB Islington schools finance guidance

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
School hours	The school day as set by the Governing Body - typically from the time pupils are required to be in school until the end of the formal school day. School hours do not include break times

	only when those breaks are part of the formal school day; they do include breaks within the school day.
School day	Any day on which the school meets pupils for compulsory education, as published in the school calendar.
Charge	A compulsory payment levied on a parent / carer in respect of a school activity, where this is permitted by law.
Voluntary contribution	A request for a parent / carer to contribute, on a wholly voluntary basis, towards the cost of an activity. No child may be excluded for non-contribution.
Remission	The waiver or reduction of a charge that would otherwise apply. Statutory remissions apply automatically where eligibility criteria are met (e.g. residential trip board and lodging for FSM-eligible pupils). Discretionary remissions may be granted by the Headteacher in cases of family hardship.
Educational visit / school trip	Any visit, journey or activity that takes place outside the school premises and which is organised by or under the auspices of the school.
Residential trip	A school trip involving overnight accommodation.
Optional extra	An activity that is offered to pupils additionally to the normal curriculum, taking place wholly or mainly outside school hours, where attendance is genuinely optional.
Wraparound care	Care provided by the school before or after the formal school day - typically Breakfast Club and After-School Club.
Statutory benefit (for the purpose of this policy)	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 guarantee element of State Pension Credit; Child Tax Credit (with no Working Tax Credit and household income below the threshold); Working Tax Credit run-on; Universal Credit (with household earned income below the threshold).

5. The Fundamental Principle: Free Education During School Hours

The starting point

Section 451 of the Education Act 1996 prohibits charging for education provided wholly or mainly during school hours. This includes the curriculum, learning resources, and any activity that is part of the curriculum. Where an activity is part of the school day, it is provided free.

In practice, at St Mary's, the following are always provided free of charge:

- Teaching during school hours, including teaching delivered by visiting professionals as part of the curriculum
- Books, materials, equipment, tablets and digital resources used during school hours for curriculum purposes
- Curriculum-based educational visits during school hours, including transport to and from the visit, where the visit is part of the curriculum
- Statutory tests and assessments, including KS2 SATs
- Swimming lessons that form part of the National Curriculum (Year 4 swimming) - see Section 9.4 below
- Religious education, collective worship, PSHE and RSHE, and any element of the school's distinctively Christian provision
- PE, sports activities and equipment provided as part of the curriculum
- Music education delivered to whole classes or large groups as part of the curriculum
- Visits from authors, artists, scientists, and other professionals where the visit is part of curriculum delivery
- Any school activity that takes place during school hours and is part of the formal curriculum

6. Voluntary Contributions

6.1 The principle

Section 455 of the Education Act 1996 expressly permits schools to invite voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities that the school could not otherwise provide. At St Mary's, we use voluntary contributions to fund activities that enrich the curriculum - educational visits, visiting professionals, residential trips, and similar.

6.2 Important conditions

Three rules that always apply when we ask for voluntary contributions

1. The contribution is genuinely voluntary. We do not pressure families to contribute. We do not name or identify families who do not contribute. We do not treat any child differently because their family has not contributed.
2. We are clear that the contribution is voluntary. Every request for a contribution states explicitly that the contribution is voluntary, that no pupil will be excluded for non-contribution, and that families experiencing hardship may speak to the office in confidence.
3. If insufficient contributions are received, the activity may be cancelled. We are honest about this from the outset. We do not subsidise activities indefinitely from the school budget where the cost was intended to be funded through voluntary contributions.

6.3 Communication with parents

Every letter or notification asking for a voluntary contribution at St Mary's includes the following standard wording (or wording with equivalent effect):

Sample wording

"We are asking for a voluntary contribution of [£X] towards the cost of [the activity]. The contribution is entirely voluntary; no pupil will be excluded if their family does not contribute. However, the activity is funded by these contributions, and if insufficient contributions are received, the activity may not be able to go ahead. If your family is experiencing financial hardship, please speak to the office in confidence - we are committed to ensuring that no child misses out for financial reasons."

6.4 If insufficient contributions are received

Where voluntary contributions are insufficient to fund an activity:

- The Headteacher reviews the position and considers whether other funding (school budget, Pupil Premium where appropriate, fundraising, sponsorship, school fund) can close the gap
- If the activity cannot be adequately funded, parents are informed promptly that the activity will not go ahead, and any contributions already received are refunded
- The school does not seek to identify which parents have or have not contributed, and does not treat the matter as a credit/debt issue between school and family

7. What the School May Charge For

The Education Act 1996 permits charges for a small number of specific things. The school may charge - with appropriate notice, transparency, and remission arrangements - for:

7.1 Education provided wholly or mainly outside school hours

Where the school provides additional education that is not part of the National Curriculum and that takes place wholly or mainly outside the normal school day, a charge may be made. Examples could include:

- Optional after-school enrichment classes that are not part of the curriculum
- Holiday courses where these are not part of the school's curriculum offer
- Optional skills programmes outside school hours

These are described in advance to parents, with cost transparently set out, and remission arrangements (Section 11) apply.

7.2 Music tuition for individual pupils or small groups

Where the school facilitates instrumental or vocal music tuition for individual pupils or for groups of up to four pupils, a charge may be made (Section 7.7 below).

7.3 Board and lodging on residential trips

On residential school trips, the school may charge parents the cost of board and lodging - but only the board and lodging element. Remission applies for pupils whose parents are in receipt of qualifying benefits (Section 11.2). The educational element of the trip remains free for all.

7.4 Lost or damaged books, equipment and materials

Where a pupil loses or wilfully damages a book, an item of equipment, school clothing in the school's charge, or other school property, the school may seek to recover the replacement cost from the parent. The school exercises this discretion proportionately, taking into account the circumstances of the loss or damage and the family's ability to pay. Genuine accidents are not normally subject to charge.

7.5 Damage to school property arising from misbehaviour

Where a pupil deliberately damages school property as a result of behaviour that breaches the school's Behaviour Policy (e.g. broken windows, vandalism, damage to digital equipment), the school may seek to recover the cost from the parent. This is exercised proportionately and with regard to the family's circumstances.

7.6 Materials and ingredients where the pupil takes the product home

Where a pupil makes a product in school as part of an activity (e.g. food technology, art, DT) and the parent has indicated that they wish the pupil to take the product home and own it, the school may charge for the cost of the materials. Where the parent does not wish to own the product, no charge is made and the school keeps or disposes of the product appropriately. This is the specific exception to the Section 454 prohibition.

7.7 Music tuition: detail

The school facilitates peripatetic music tuition through approved providers (e.g. Islington Music Service or LDBS-recommended providers). For tuition delivered to individual pupils or to groups of up to four pupils:

- A charge is made, payable to the school or directly to the provider
- Charges are notified to parents in advance, with terms and any cancellation policy
- Remission for pupils whose parents are in receipt of qualifying benefits is provided where the school has the funding to do so, in line with Section 11.4 below
- Whole-class music education delivered as part of the curriculum is free

7.8 Wraparound care

Charges for the school's Breakfast Club and After-School Club are set annually by the Governing Body and are published in advance. Wraparound care is wholly outside school hours and is properly subject to charge. Where the school operates wraparound care directly:

- Fees are notified to parents in advance
- Subsidised places are made available for pupils on Free School Meals where funding allows
- Universal Credit childcare element may be applicable to families using wraparound care; the school provides receipts as required
- Bookings, payments, refunds and cancellations are managed in line with the school's Wraparound Care Terms and Conditions

7.9 Letting of school premises to external users

Where the school lets premises to external users outside the school day (e.g. parish church groups, community organisations, sports clubs), charges are governed by the Letting of School Premises arrangements approved by the Governing Body. These arrangements are separate from this policy.

8. What the School Cannot Charge For

By law, we cannot charge for any of the following:

- Education provided during school hours, including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or equipment
- Statutory tests and assessments (KS2 SATs)
- Education provided outside school hours where it is part of the National Curriculum or is a religious education syllabus / required for compulsory examinations
- Transport to and from the school for journeys to or from the place where school education is provided
- Transport for educational visits during school hours that are part of the curriculum
- Entry to museums, galleries or sites visited during school hours where the visit is part of the curriculum
- Admission to swimming lessons that are part of the National Curriculum
- Materials for activities during school hours, except where the parent wishes the pupil to own the product
- The educational element (as distinct from board and lodging) of a residential trip

9. Specific Activity Arrangements

9.1 Educational visits during school hours

Educational visits that take place during school hours and form part of the curriculum (e.g. a class visit to a museum, a faith-based visit, a science centre trip, a Key Stage 2 trip to support a topic) are part of the school day. The school does not charge for these visits. Where the cost cannot be met from the school budget, voluntary contributions are invited under Section 6 above.

9.2 Educational visits outside school hours

Where a school visit is wholly or mainly outside school hours and is genuinely optional (i.e. not part of the National Curriculum or compulsory study), the school may charge. In primary practice this is rare; most primary visits are during school hours and are part of the curriculum.

9.3 Residential school trips

St Mary's offers a residential trip in upper Key Stage 2 (typically Year 6). The arrangements are:

- The educational element of the trip is provided free
- Parents may be charged the board and lodging element of the trip

- Remission for board and lodging applies for pupils whose parents are in receipt of qualifying benefits (Section 11.2)
- Where the trip cost is in part funded through voluntary contributions, the principles of Section 6 apply
- Detailed financial information - total cost, board and lodging element, voluntary contribution element, payment schedule, deposit, cancellation terms - is provided to all parents in advance in writing
- Cancellation by the family is governed by the trip operator's terms; the school will normally seek to refund recoverable amounts but cannot refund non-recoverable deposits
- Hardship arrangements are available; families experiencing hardship are invited to speak to the office in confidence

9.4 Swimming

Year 4 swimming forms part of the National Curriculum. The school provides:

- Coach transport to and from the swimming pool, free of charge
- Swimming lessons during school hours, free of charge
- Use of school-provided floats and aids, free of charge

Parents are responsible for the provision of their child's swimming kit (costume / trunks, towel, swimming hat, goggles where preferred). Where a family experiences hardship in providing kit, the school maintains a small stock of items that can be loaned and the office should be approached in confidence.

9.5 Music tuition

As set out in Section 7.7. Where parents wish to take up tuition through the school's arrangements:

- They are informed in writing of the cost, the terms, and the cancellation arrangements
- They are informed of any remission or hardship arrangements
- They are informed of payment methods and frequency (typically termly billing)

9.6 Visits from authors, artists, scientists and visiting professionals

Visits from authors, artists, scientists, faith leaders, sports professionals and others are part of the curriculum. The school covers the cost from the school budget or invites voluntary contributions in line with Section 6. The school does not charge.

9.7 School productions, concerts and performances

Where the school stages a production, concert, or performance:

- Pupils' participation is free
- Costumes are provided by the school where this can be reasonably done; where families are asked to provide costume items, the school is sensitive to hardship and

ensures any pupil whose family cannot provide a costume is fully included (e.g. through a costume bank)

- Tickets for parents and family members may incur a small charge to cover venue, programme, and incidental costs
- Audio recordings or filming are made in line with the school's Image Use Policy and parental consent

9.8 School photographs

Class and individual school photographs are arranged with an external photography company. The company invoices parents directly. The school does not charge a markup. Parents are not obliged to purchase photographs and no pupil is treated differently for non-purchase. School photographs are taken with parental consent in line with the Image Use Policy.

9.9 Parents' evenings and consultations

Parents' evenings, parent consultations and similar are free. No charge is made for any school-organised meeting between parents and staff.

9.10 Lost property

Lost property is held for a reasonable period and parents are notified through normal channels. Unclaimed items are donated to charity. No charge is made for the return of lost property.

9.11 School fund / charitable collections

From time to time the school participates in charity collections (e.g. Children in Need, Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day, Lent collections). All such collections are clearly identified as charitable, are voluntary, and proceeds are donated to the named charity. The school is transparent about how much is raised and where it goes.

10. Free School Meals (FSM) and Universal Free School Meals

Eligibility for Free School Meals is governed by national rules. At St Mary's:

- Pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 receive Universal Infant Free School Meals during term time, regardless of family income
- Pupils in Years 3-6 are eligible for Free School Meals where their family receives one of the qualifying benefits listed in Section 4 (definitions)
- Eligibility checking is undertaken by Islington / the school's administrative team using the DfE's Eligibility Checking Service, with parental consent
- Families are encouraged to register even where their child is in Reception-Year 2 (UIFSM), because eligibility-based registration generates Pupil Premium funding and triggers automatic remission for residential trip board and lodging and other entitlements

- FSM information is held confidentially in line with the Data Protection Policy; pupils on FSM are not identified to peers

Detailed arrangements for FSM - daily meal provision, holiday provision where available, and family communication - are governed by the school's wider FSM and catering arrangements.

11. Remissions

11.1 The principle

Remissions are reductions or waivers of charges that would otherwise apply. Some remissions are required by law; others are exercised by the school as a matter of policy and discretion.

11.2 Statutory remission - board and lodging on residential trips

Where the school charges for board and lodging on a residential trip, the charge is fully remitted (i.e. waived) for pupils whose parents are in receipt of any of the qualifying benefits listed in Section 4. The school identifies eligible pupils through its FSM records and Pupil Premium status and applies the remission automatically. Parents do not need to apply.

11.3 Discretionary remission - hardship

In addition to the statutory remission, the Governing Body authorises the Headteacher to apply discretionary remissions or reductions in cases of family hardship. This applies to:

- Residential trip costs (over and above the statutory remission)
- Day trip voluntary contributions
- Wraparound care fees
- Music tuition fees
- Costume / equipment costs for school activities
- Other costs that families may struggle to meet

Discretionary remission decisions are taken on the basis of:

- The family's circumstances, as confidentially explained by the parent
- The activity's benefit to the pupil
- The school's available funding (e.g. Pupil Premium, school fund, school budget allocation, charitable bequests, parish support)
- Equality considerations

Discretionary decisions are recorded confidentially. The Headteacher reports to the Governing Body annually on the use of discretionary remissions in aggregate - number, total value, categories - without identifying individual families.

11.4 Music tuition remission

The school seeks to ensure that music tuition is accessible to pupils whose families could not otherwise afford it. Where funding permits (typically through Pupil Premium, the school fund, or specific bursaries from Islington Music Service or LDBS):

- Pupil Premium pupils receive subsidised or free music tuition
- Pupils in families experiencing hardship may receive subsidised tuition through discretionary application
- Where free tuition is offered, this is not identified to peers

11.5 How to apply for discretionary remission

The school invites families experiencing hardship to speak to the office in confidence. Applications can be made:

- By speaking to the School Business Manager or Headteacher - a confidential conversation suffices
- In writing if the family prefers
- At any stage - we do not require advance notice; we recognise that family circumstances can change
- With or without supporting documentation; we do not require families to evidence hardship beyond what they choose to share

All applications are treated confidentially. The fact that a family has applied is not disclosed beyond those with a legitimate role in the decision. Where remission is granted, this is communicated to the family in writing.

12. Equality and Inclusion

12.1 Equality Act considerations

The school complies with the Equality Act 2010 in operating this policy. Specifically:

- Charging arrangements do not directly or indirectly discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic
- Reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils and their families - e.g. accessibility-related travel costs for trips are met by the school where they would otherwise fall on the family
- The Public Sector Equality Duty is considered when reviewing arrangements

12.2 SEND and additional needs

Where a pupil with SEND or a medical condition would incur additional cost to participate in a school activity (e.g. specialist transport, additional staffing, specific equipment), the school meets these costs from its SEND budget, school budget, or specific funding streams. Such costs are not passed to the family beyond the equivalent of any standard charge that would apply to all pupils.

12.3 Looked After Children

LAC and previously LAC are entitled to support including, where relevant, fully funded participation in school trips and activities through the Pupil Premium Plus arrangements administered with the Virtual School Head. The school works with the VSH to ensure no LAC pupil is excluded from any activity for financial reasons.

12.4 Service families and other specific cohorts

The school is aware of the financial circumstances and entitlements of specific cohorts (Service families, asylum-seeker and refugee families, Gypsy/Roma/Traveller families, etc.) and applies discretionary remission accordingly. The school does not stigmatise or identify these pupils to peers.

13. Communication, Transparency and Records

13.1 Communication with parents

Communication about charges, contributions and remissions:

- Is in writing and in plain English (with translation or interpretation support where needed)
- Is timely - typically at least three weeks before payment is required for non-trivial amounts, and longer for residential trips
- Is transparent - stating clearly what the cost is, what it covers, what is voluntary vs charged, and what remission may apply
- Is dignified - communications about non-payment or hardship are private and respectful
- Is accessible - alternative formats and additional explanation are available on request

13.2 Records

- Records of charges raised, payments received, remissions granted, and outstanding balances are maintained in the school's finance system (typically Arbor finance / ParentPay)
- Records of discretionary remission decisions are held confidentially by the Headteacher / Business Manager
- Aggregate data is reported to the Governing Body in the annual review of this policy
- Records are retained in line with the school's Data Retention Schedule
- Personal data is processed in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices

13.3 Payment methods

The school operates payment through its approved system (typically ParentPay or equivalent). Cash payments are minimised and, where unavoidable, are receipted and recorded. The school accepts that some families may not have ready access to digital payment and accommodates this without inconvenience or stigma.

13.4 Outstanding amounts

Where a family has outstanding amounts owed to the school:

- The school takes a sensitive approach in the first instance - a private conversation with the family
- Where hardship is the issue, this is treated as an opportunity to apply discretionary remission, not as a debt issue
- Where there is no hardship and the amount remains unpaid, the school may follow a polite reminder process
- The school does not pursue families through formal debt collection for school activity charges; the priority is the relationship and the child's welfare
- No child is ever excluded from a school activity, treated differently, or named in connection with their family's outstanding amounts

14. Review

14.1 Review schedule

This policy is reviewed:

- Annually by the Governing Body - typically alongside budget approval
- Whenever the Education Act 1996 or related legislation is amended
- Whenever DfE guidance is updated
- In response to any specific operational issue arising
- In light of consultation with parents, staff, and the LDBS where appropriate

14.2 Approval and publication

This policy is approved by the full Governing Body. The signed policy is published on the school website (statutory information section) and is available in hard copy on request. The policy is brought to the attention of all parents at admission and at the start of each academic year.

Appendix A: Quick Reference Summary for Parents

WHAT IS ALWAYS FREE

All teaching during school hours • All books, equipment and materials used in school • SATs and other statutory tests • Curriculum-based educational visits during school hours including transport • Year 4 swimming lessons and pool transport • Whole-class music in the curriculum • Religious education and collective worship • PE and sports as part of the curriculum • Visiting professionals as part of the curriculum • The educational element of all school trips

WHAT WE INVITE VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS FOR

Educational visits during school hours where the school cannot meet the full cost from its budget • Visits from authors, artists, scientists, faith leaders • Special enrichment activities • The educational element of residential trips

Voluntary means voluntary. No child is excluded for non-contribution. If your family is experiencing hardship, please speak to the office in confidence.

WHAT WE MAY CHARGE FOR

The board and lodging element of residential trips (with statutory remission for FSM-eligible pupils) • Music tuition for individual pupils or small groups • Optional after-school enrichment activities not part of the curriculum • Wraparound care (Breakfast Club, After-School Club) • Materials where you wish your child to keep what they make • Replacement of lost or wilfully damaged school property • Tickets for parents to attend school productions

REMISSIONS - NO CHILD MISSES OUT

Statutory remission applies automatically for residential trip board and lodging where your family is on Free School Meals or qualifying benefits. Discretionary remission may be granted by the Headteacher in cases of hardship for any chargeable activity. Speak to the office in confidence - we are committed to ensuring no child misses out for financial reasons.

Appendix B: Quick Reference Summary for Staff

When organising an activity, ask...	And follow this rule
Is the activity part of education during school hours?	It must be free. Charge is unlawful. Voluntary contribution may be invited.
Is the activity part of the National Curriculum (e.g. swimming, statutory PE)?	It must be free. Charge is unlawful, even if outside school hours.
Is it a residential trip?	Charge for board and lodging only. Educational element free. Statutory remission for FSM-eligible pupils.
Is it music tuition for an individual or up to four pupils?	Charge permitted. Subsidy / remission per Section 11.4.
Is it an optional activity wholly or mainly outside school hours, not part of the curriculum?	Charge permitted. Standard remission considerations apply.

Is it wraparound care (Breakfast Club, After-School Club)?	Charge permitted at published rates. Subsidised places where funding allows.
Is it a damaged book / equipment / property where pupil wilfully caused damage?	Charge permitted, exercised proportionately, with regard to family circumstances.
Is it materials where the pupil takes the product home (food tech, art, DT)?	Charge permitted only if the parent wishes the pupil to own the product.
Is the family experiencing hardship?	Speak to the Headteacher / Business Manager. Discretionary remission applies.
When in doubt	Refer to this policy or speak to the Business Manager / Headteacher BEFORE communicating any charge to families.

Appendix C: Sample Letter Templates

Letter A — Educational visit during school hours, voluntary contribution

Dear Parents,

I am writing to let you know about an exciting educational visit that [Class] will take part in on [date]. We will visit [venue] as part of our learning on [topic]. The visit will run during the school day and pupils will return to school by [time].

The total cost of the visit, including transport and entry, is approximately £X per pupil. We are inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution of £X towards this cost.

Important: this contribution is entirely voluntary. No pupil will be excluded from the visit if their family does not contribute. However, the visit is funded by these contributions, and if insufficient contributions are received, we may not be able to go ahead.

If your family is experiencing financial hardship and the contribution would be difficult, please speak to [Business Manager / Headteacher] in confidence - we are committed to ensuring no child misses out for financial reasons. There is also no need to identify yourself if you do not wish to contribute.

Please return the consent form by [date] and, if you wish to contribute, payment can be made via [ParentPay / equivalent].

Yours sincerely, [Headteacher]

Letter B — Residential trip

Dear Parents,

I am writing about the Year 6 residential trip to [venue] from [dates]. The trip is an important part of our Year 6 experience and offers pupils a wonderful opportunity for personal development, friendships, and outdoor learning.

Total cost per pupil: £X. This is broken down as follows:

- Board and lodging element: £Y (this is the only portion that we are required to charge for)
- Educational element (transport, instruction, activities): £Z (this is provided free as it is part of the educational programme; the school covers this cost from its own funds and through any voluntary contributions made)

Statutory remission: Where your family is in receipt of Free School Meals or other qualifying benefits, the board and lodging cost is waived. The school will identify eligible families from our records and apply this automatically.

Discretionary remission: If your family is not eligible for statutory remission but is experiencing hardship, please speak to [Business Manager / Headteacher] in confidence. We are committed to ensuring every Year 6 pupil can attend.

Payment schedule: A non-refundable deposit of £D is requested by [date], with the balance payable in instalments by [date].

Cancellation by family: Where a family cancels, recoverable amounts will be refunded. Some elements (e.g. deposits to the trip operator) may not be recoverable.

We will hold an information meeting on [date] where you can ask questions.

Yours sincerely, [Headteacher]

Appendix D: Key Roles and Contacts

Role	Name and Contact
Headteacher	[Name, contact]
School Business Manager	[Name, contact]
Chair of Governors	[Name, contact]
Finance Governor / Resources Committee Chair	[Name, contact]
SENCO	Lucy Courtney-Diggins, 020 7359 1870
Data Protection Officer	Claire Mahegan

Designated Teacher for LAC	[Name, contact]
LB Islington Schools Finance / Free School Meals	[Contact]
Islington Music Service	[Contact]
LDBS Schools Adviser	[Contact]
School payment system (ParentPay or equivalent)	[Login URL / contact]

Appendix E: References and Related Guidance

- Education Act 1996, sections 449-462
- School Information (England) Regulations 2008 (as amended)
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Acts 1989 and 2004; Children and Families Act 2014
- UK GDPR; Data Protection Act 2018; Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- DfE: Charging for school activities - departmental advice (current version)
- DfE: Statutory policies for schools and academy trusts (current version)
- DfE: Pupil Premium guidance (current version)
- DfE: Free School Meals - guidance for local authorities and schools (current version)
- DfE: Wraparound care guidance
- LDBS guidance for Voluntary Aided Church of England schools
- LB Islington schools finance guidance
- School policies: Pupil Premium Strategy; Equality; Educational Visits; Behaviour; Data Protection; Wraparound Care Terms; Children with Health Needs; Looked After Children; Image Use and Photography; Complaints; Letting of School Premises

‘Let your light shine before others.’

Education at St Mary’s is, by law and by conviction, free during school hours. No child ever misses out on the life of the school because their family cannot pay. This policy is the practical expression of that promise.