



Charging Policy

Summer 2023



Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Multi Academy Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales under company registration number: 07696069 and registered address: St. Alban's Catholic Academy, First Avenue, Harlow, Essex, CM20 2NP.

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic MAT

Charging and Remissions Policy

The Board of Trustees has resolved to make charges as allowed by the Education Reform Act 1988.

CHARGING POLICY

School Meals

The charge for a school meal will be set annually by the Board of Trustees following consideration of the Catering Business Plan as part of the annual budget setting process. All meals taken by pupils who are not eligible for free school meals will be chargeable, parents/carers are expected to make prompt payment. Where payments are not made in advance of the meal being taken, parents/carers will be reminded of their debt by Arbor. There is no charge for pupils who are entitled to free school meals or universal infant free school meals.

Educational visits:

Our aim when planning a school trip is to keep contribution costs to a minimum and seek value for money. Parents and carers are given maximum notice and a detailed breakdown of costs where possible.

The academy:

- will seek voluntary contributions from parents/carers where applicable
- will not exclude a child from participating in an activity during the school day on financial grounds
- The academy works on a full cost recovery basis including reimbursement of reasonable administration costs and Arbor charges.

Where 10% or more of parents decline to make the requested voluntary contribution (their identity will remain confidential), or the contributions shortfall is £50 or more, then a discussion will take place within the leadership team regarding whether the visit or activity will not take place. If the shortfall is £250 or more then the Chair of Governors will be consulted.

Swimming Lessons

The academy operates on full cost recovery basis. However, in order to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils, charges for swimming lessons within school hours for pupils eligible for free school meals or children in care will be considered for remission in accordance with this policy (see remissions section).

Residential activities:

The costs of residential activities can be high and such activities may only continue to be available if sufficient costs are recovered.

Charges that apply:

- travel costs – transport to and from the residential activity
- board and lodging
 - full cost of board and lodging on residential trips whether or not it takes place during school hours
 - parents / carers will be informed of the cost before the activity takes place
- costs of supply staff engaged to cover the staff accompanying pupils on a residential trip where the trip takes place during term time
- full cost recovery for residential activities that take place outside of school hours

NB> The academy will, at the request of the parents, or upon advice of the Inclusion leader subsidise the cost of any residential trip for children of families claiming free school meals, or experiencing financial difficulties. At a maximum of 50% of the total cost.

No charge applies:

- where parents / carers in receipt of certain benefits may claim exemption in accordance with the remissions guidance below
- for education costs incurred on any visit during school hours
- for education costs incurred on any visit outside school hours if it part of the academy's curriculum

Music Tuition

Instrumental tuition or singing lessons do not form part of the curriculum but are an additional activity arranged by the academy and delivered by specialist tutors either on an individual basis or as part of a group, following parental request. The cost of such lessons is dependent on the charges applied by the tutors, the size of the group, the duration and frequency of each lesson.

The academy operates on full cost recovery basis. However, in order to ensure equal opportunities for all pupils, charges for music tuition within school hours for pupils eligible for free school meals or children in care will be considered for remission in accordance with this policy (see remissions section).

Examination fees

No charge when:

- an exam is part of the curriculum
- an exam is on the academy's set examinations list
- the pupil has been prepared for that exam by the academy
- the exam is not on the set list, but has been arranged by the academy

Charges do apply when:

- the pupil has not been prepared for the exam by the academy
- the pupil wishes to re-sit an exam

Extra-curricular activities:

Curriculum related clubs

Where these activities run outside of normal school hours, (ie. sports clubs, homework club, art club) a charge may be made to cover costs of equipment, teaching or non-teaching staff, specialist staff /coaches or materials used. The total charge will not exceed the actual costs incurred in the provision of the activity and will be set by the Headteacher.

Parents/carers will be advised of any such costs before their child is allowed to undertake any such activity and participation will be on the basis of the parents' willingness to pay the charges.

Parents/carers are able to claim remission from such charges in accordance with the guidance below.

Breakfast Club

- charges apply and must be paid in advance of booking through the parent portal on Arbor.

After School Club

- charges apply and must be paid in advance of booking through the parent portal on Arbor.

Other areas

Charges apply:

- books and materials belonging to the academy that a pupil has lost
- books and materials that a parent wishes a pupil to keep after having been advised of the cost
- activities taking place outside school hours that are not
 - part of the academy's curriculum
 - part of a syllabus for a public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the academy
 - part of the academy's basic religious education
- property damage – each individual case to be decided upon by the Headteacher
 - full repair costs incurred as a result of wilful or reckless damage to academy property by a pupil or parent/carer
 - full recovery of costs incurred by the academy as a result of damage caused by a pupil to third party property

No charge applies:

- for activities taking place during school hours except any of those listed above
- for activities outside school hours that are part of the
 - set curriculum including sports matches against other academies / schools
 - syllabus for a public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the academy
 - academy's basic religious education syllabus
- for admissions.

Voluntary contributions

The academy may, from time to time, ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions to the academy's general funds in order to assist with the provision of resources to enhance their children's education. There will be no pressure exerted and any contribution will be gratefully received.

Where the voluntary contribution applies to an educational visit or extra-curricular activity, if the sufficient level of contributions is not achieved, that activity will be cancelled; any monies already collected will be refunded to the relevant parents/carers.

DBS checks

The academy will cover the cost of DBS checks for all employed staff.

The academy will cover the cost of DBS checks for volunteers.

REMISSIONS POLICY

The Headteacher and Chair of Trustees will authorise the remission of charges in all cases.

The academy will offer, upon request, the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the relevant support payments (in accordance with the current DfE listing) which make their child/children eligible for free school meals and for children in care.

All claims for remission of charges should be addressed to the Headteacher and will be dealt with confidentially.

The academy may decide to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and pupils; each event or case will be considered individually by the Headteacher and the Board of Trustees.