Charges and Remissions Policy

Laetare Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

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1. Introduction

The Laetare CMAT (the Trust) is committed to providing an outstanding and distinctive experience of Catholic education for the young people in its academies. It is rooted in the conviction that the distinctive charisms of the Religious Orders who founded schools are a powerful vehicle for inspiring academic and human excellence. As a family of schools founded by Religious Orders, the Laetare CMAT is part of the Catholic Church's educational mission, continues to assist in the Church's mission of making Christ known to all people. Each of our schools "place Christ at the centre of all that it does" and integrate Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church into every aspect of learning, teaching and the totality of school life.

The Trust affirms the dignity of the human person making "an education in the fullness of humanity" the defining feature of the Trust's schools. To this end we have a particular regard to the statements on Catholic education issued from time to time by the Holy See's Dicastery for Culture and Education and the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and act under the jurisdiction of the designated Bishop to the Trust and the relevant Diocesan Bishop who holds canonical responsibility for the provision of all Catholic education within his Diocese.

God centred, rooted in Christ and animated by the spirit of the founders of the Religious Orders who have schools within the Laetare CMAT, this policy aims to implement the vision of Laetare to provide an education of high standards where all are included, all can achieve of their best and can go into the future as people who work for justice and show compassion for the vulnerable and the marginalised, people who have the courage and independence of mind to challenge a materialistic culture, people who have a care and respect for the earth, and people who are co-creators of a better world for all.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedures is to describe the charges and remissions that will be made by schools in the CMAT. The aims of this Charging and Remissions Policy are to:

- Have clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activities that can be charged for and when charges will be made
- Identify the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1. Board of Directors

The Board of Directors has overall responsibility for approving and monitoring the policy, but has delegated this to the Finance and Resources Committee.

3.2. Chief Finance and Operations Officer (CFOO)

The CFOO is responsible for ensuring finance staff are familiar with the policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

3.3. School business leader (SBL)

The SBL is responsible for:

- Ensuring the charging and remissions policy is implemented consistently
- Notifying the CFOO of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies.

3.4. Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the policy.

4. Definitions

4.1. School hours

If 50% or more of the total time for an activity, including any travel time, is within school hours, the entire activity is considered to be during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

4.2 School sessions

A school day is divided into two sessions. A half day is any period of 12 hours ending at either noon or midnight on any day.

For residential trips, if 50% or more of the half-days are school sessions, the whole trip is considered to be during school hours. A half-day is a period of 12 hours ending noon or midnight.

5. Activities for which charges are not made

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- 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
  - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
  - Religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school

- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority (LA) has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the Trust or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit which meets the criteria described in section 5.3 below.

5.3 Residential visits

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of:
  - The National Curriculum
  - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
  - Religious education
- Supply teachers, covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

The board and lodging element on school trips will always be charged for. The charge must no exceed the actual cost.

6. Activities for which charges are made

6.1. Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wishes the child to own them – this includes the cost of materials/ingredients for subjects such as design or food technology where parents have indicated in advance that they would the pupil to bring home the finished product
- Optional extras (see section 6.2 below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Community facilities
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school and the pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus. Schools may also charge for examinations if the pupil has not been prepared for the examination at the school. This charge may include the cost of resources.

6.2. Optional extras

Our schools may charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, our schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is **not** part of:
  - The National Curriculum
  - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
  - Religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the LA or governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to:

- An administration fee of 5% of the cost to cover payment transaction processing fees
- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra)
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra
- Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating
- Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra that is to be charged for.

6.3. Musical instrument tuition and hire

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent/carer.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the National Curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority.

6.4. Photocopying and printing

All printing and copying costs associated with the provision of the National Curriculum are paid for by the school. Students receive an annual allowance for printing / copying and can purchase additional credits from IT if required. Voluntary contributions may be requested from parents for the provision of specialist resources on occasions.

7. Voluntary Contributions

Whilst there is no charge for the activities described in section 5 of this policy, our schools may ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions towards the cost. There is no obligation for parents/carers to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay.

If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it may be cancelled.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents/carers for voluntary contributions include:

- Activities which take place during annual Activity Days / Activity Week
- Games afternoons.

8. Charities and school funds

Contributions to a charitable or school fund may be requested from parents each year. These contributions are voluntary. There is no obligation for a parent or carer to make any contribution.

9. Damage

A replacement or repair charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage to, neglect of or loss of school property including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials.

10. DBS

Trust will facilitate a DBS check for those who do not hold a contract of employment with the school, but will reserve the right to charge the individual. For example, school will arrange a check for a peripatetic music teacher but a fee will be charged, as the DBS is owned by the individual and can be used at any other school or organisation.

11. Lettings

Please see our Lettings Charging Policy for further information on the charges associated with lettings.

12. Remission of Charges

In some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in section 7 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the school and will depend on the activity in question.

Parents/carers who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- 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 guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit – provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if you apply on or after 1 April 2018, your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

13. Refunds