ST. MARY'S
MENSTON

POLICY

Charging

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ST MARY'S MENSTON
A CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

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The Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust is a charity and a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales.
Company Number: 8399801. Registered Office: St. Mary's Menston, A Catholic Voluntary Academy, Bradford Road, Menston, LS29 6AE

Our Purpose

We are a pilgrim school and we journey with Mary to become the person God intends us to be.

This policy was approved by the acting headteacher on behalf of the Academy Council.

M Hattersley

Headteacher

POLICY STATEMENT

St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy Charging Policy is formulated in accordance with section 449- 462 of the Education Act 1996 which sets out the law on charging for school activities. The Academy Council focusses upon providing the best education possible at a time of increasing demands on funding. The aim of this policy is to set out charges, refunds, remissions, the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested and the process for applying for financial support.

Charges

School Trips and Visits: Pupils are encouraged to take part in our varied calendar of school trips and visits. Some activities take place during the school day, others outside of school time. Visits may be a prescribed part of the curriculum, others are deemed 'optional extras'. In any event, charges will not exceed the cost of the visit.

The legislation relating to 'voluntary contributions' applies to activities deemed to be an essential part of the curriculum. Payment for all such activities are voluntary contributions, however no pupil will be excluded from a curriculum-related activity should parents be unable or unwilling to pay. There is no obligation to pay for curriculum-related activities, however should insufficient voluntary contributions be received, and the school is unable to fund the activity from another source, the activity may need to be cancelled. Further information on DfE school charges guidance can be found here.

Activities that take place outside of the school day, not considered an essential part of the curriculum, are known as 'optional extras' and will be charged for.

Year 8 Residential Visit: Charges are levied for board and lodging. Parents/carers in receipt of certain benefits such as income support, jobseekers' allowance and child tax credits, are exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for the Y8 residential visit. The list of benefits to which this applies can be found here. Please contact the Headteacher in writing if you wish to claim exemption. The school may request evidence of benefit entitlement.

Books & Equipment: Books and equipment are provided and must be treated with care. Charges may be requested for the replacement of lost, defaced or damaged items. Should pupils wish to own books or equipment, charges will apply. Pupils can use their own personal equipment. The school's behaviour policy outlines essential and desirable equipment if a parent wishes their child to use them.

Examinations: Re-sit entry fees will be charged in advance if the entry is requested by pupils / parents.

Voluntary Contribution Scheme

St Mary's does operate a VCS and are very grateful for the support we receive from St. Mary's parents for the development of our buildings. We spend voluntary contributions on projects that improve the environment for our pupils: such as decorating classrooms and corridors; refurbishing toilets; ICT equipment. Further information on the St Mary's VCS can be found here.

Refunds

Deposits: Deposits for activities are generally non-refundable, except where another pupil can take the place.

Cancellation by school: Where an activity has been cancelled due to insufficient voluntary contributions, all payments received will be refunded in full.

Non-attendance due to illness / injury: Cases are considered on an individual basis and referred to the school's travel insurers. All reasonable efforts are made to provide a refund, but this may not always be possible.

Free School Meals: Refunds will be back-dated to the date that school is informed in writing of the entitlement by the benefits agency.

Financial Difficulty

Requests for financial assistance should be made, in writing (e.g. letter/email), to the Headteacher upon receipt of the request outlining the details of the activity, or as soon as parents are aware that an activity is to take place.

- A small contingency fund is held to support requests for financial assistance. Therefore, the school will endeavor to provide support wherever possible. Curriculum-related activities will take preference over optional extras.
- Parents in receipt of benefits will be considered as first priority for assistance. The school may request evidence of benefit entitlement.
- All cases will be treated individually and in confidence.
- Flexible payment terms are available for most charges, through our online 'Parentpay' system