

## The Policy on Charges approved by the Governors of St. Michael's following the Education Reform Act 1988

As a result of the Education Reform Act of 1988 it is a statutory obligation laid upon all Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools to produce a policy on "charging" for certain activities. The policy has been agreed by the Governors of St. Michael's.

### A. Legal Principles

- i) Pupils of compulsory school age cannot be asked to pay for any visit that is in school hours.
- ii) Pupils cannot be asked to pay for a visit, inside or outside school hours, which is required by a National Curriculum or the syllabus of a prescribed public examination.
- iii) Pupils cannot be asked to pay for transport, materials or equipment required for such visits. Charges can be made for board and lodging on a residential trip, except to parents who are in receipt of Income Support.
- iv)
  - a) Pupils cannot be charged for materials and equipment which are an integral part of the school syllabus. (Equipment does not include clothing).
  - b) Pupils cannot be charged for ingredients, materials, equipment, etc., needed for practical subjects. Parents who are willing to do so can be encouraged to do so on a voluntary basis. The school may charge for such materials if the parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product.
- v) A charge may be made in respect of individual tuition in playing any musical instrument even if such tuition takes place during school hours, except where it is provided to fulfil the requirements for a syllabus for a prescribed public examination or the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Educational visits for which only voluntary contributions can be requested: pupils of compulsory school age

- i) For any residential visit within school time (i.e.: more school "sessions" involved than non-school "sessions"), no charges can be levied except for board and lodgings.
- ii) No charge can be made for any day visit within school time unless it is stated quite clearly to the Parents that their contribution is voluntary. No child eligible to take part can be left out of the visit because the Parent has refused to contribute. Where necessary a proviso can be included to parents which states that if adequate money is not collected the visit may not take place.

School visits for which charges may be made

- i) The 1988 Act allows for "Optional Extra" charges for activities and visits which are not required by the National Curriculum or public examinations syllabuses which fall outside the school day. The cost can then include:
  - material and equipment
  - provision of non-teaching staff
  - teaching staff who are engaged on a contract to provide that specific activity (but not other teachers on a normal LEA contract).
  - any incidental staff costs such as transport, board and lodgings, admission charges etc.

- ii) For any day visit where more than 50% of the visit including travelling time is outside school hours then the whole of the visit is to be counted as outside school hours and for these charges can be made (see above).
- iii) For any residential visit charges can be made for the items listed above if the visit includes more non-school 'sessions' than school 'sessions'. (If there are an equal number no charge can be made).

## B. Necessitous Pupils

1. Where a voluntary contribution is sought to make it possible to pursue a part of a course at a more interesting and useful place and that course is part of the school programme then the organiser will receive from the school the appropriate voluntary contribution for each child on Income Support on receipt of a letter of explanation from parents.

The school will continue to pay towards the cost of A level Field Studies and some GCSE Field Studies.

However, in general, for residential visits the charges will be levied for board and lodgings for visits organised both in and out of school time.

2. If a pupil is not on Family Credit or Income Support but there clearly is financial difficulty then the school will use discretion in offering support and may ask for a letter of explanation from the parents.
3. There will be no necessity for the school to pay for a pupil for 'optional extra' activities for which parents may legally be charged.

## C. Activities within the School

### a) Music Tuition

The Act does make provision for charging for 'optional' music tuition.

### b) Examinations

- i) No charges may be made for entry to prescribed public examinations or transport to take a pupil to an examination for which they have been prepared and entered by the school. However, any subsequent retake of the same examination is chargeable.
- ii) If the Governors decide to enter a pupil for a prescribed examination not prepared at the school (i.e. private entry) the costs may be charged for.
- iii) The Governors (delegated to the Head) will decide which pupils enter for which exams.

### c) School Property

- i) The school can ask for payments for replacement of books, equipment etc that have been lost and for wilful damage to school property.