




# St Alban's RC High School

# Charging & Remissions

# Policy

ORIGIN:	Governing Body Policy No: v0001.00
COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE:	Recruitment & Resources
LEAD MEMBER:	Business Manager
DATE APPROVED:	08/04/2025
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS NAME:	Chris Evans
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS SIGNATURE:	
REVIEW DATE:	08/04/2026

*St Alban's RC High School is a voluntary aided school and the governing body is the employer of the staff who work there. The contract of employment is between the school's governing body and the employee. The governing body has all the employment responsibilities that this entails including the appointment and dismissal of staff.*

## **Introduction**

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs, trips and residential experiences can make towards the pupils' education.

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional activities.

The Governing Body RESERVES THE RIGHT to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school

## **Definition**

The school day is defined as: 8.40 am to 3.10 p.m.

## **Responsibilities**

The headteacher will ensure that staff are familiar with and correctly apply the policy. The Governors will review the policy annually.

## **Policy statement**

During the school day all activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education will be provided free of charge. This includes:

No charge will be made for the following:

- an admission application;
- 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 or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school. However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents.

St Albans RC High School will charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- any materials for subjects such as design and technology where parents or students would like to retain the finished product
- optional extras (see below)
- general music and vocal tuition
- examination re-sit(s) requested by the parent
- re-marks (a refund will be made in the event of a higher mark being awarded and the school has recovered the fees)
- Access to scripts requested by the parent
- late withdrawal of an entry for an examination by the student or the parent e.g. incomplete coursework
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;

## **Optional Extras**

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as “optional extras”. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. Optional extras are:

education provided outside of school time that is not:

- a) part of the National Curriculum;
  - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
  - c) part of religious education.
- transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education; and
  - board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit;
  - entrance fees (museums etc)
  - insurance costs
  - any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs e.g. field trips.

In these circumstances no pupil will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. [If insufficient funds are available it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities]

From time to time we may invite a non-school based organisation such as a *visiting drama group or storyteller* to arrange an activity during the school day. Such organisations may wish to charge parents, who may, if they wish, ask the headteacher to agree to their child being absent for that period.

## **Optional activities outside of the school day**

We will charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example theatre visits. Such activities are not part of the National Curriculum or religious education nor are they part of an examination syllabus.

## **Education partly during the school day**

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside the school day and partly outside of it, there will be no charge if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the school day. Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal school day, charges will be made. When such activities are arranged parents will be told how the charges were calculated.

## **Residential**

The school usually organises residential visits for pupils. The total pupil cost of the trip is divided by the total amount of pupils who will be attending; this includes travel costs, accommodation, food costs.

## **Calculating charges**

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred (including VAT), divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on

those who can pay to support those who can't or won't. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising.

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents.

### **Payments and Debts**

Our preferred method for payments is the 'School Gateway' this system is also used to communicate with parents more quickly and cost effectively via email, text and smartphone app.

For large value trips the trip leader must follow the guidance set out on the Trips and Visits Google Classroom.

All deposits (unless otherwise specified) will be NON REFUNDABLE and will need to be paid by a given deadline. The School Gateway provides parents with the option to make regular instalments off the balance. A deadline must be specified for all payments required and regular reminders will be issued for all payment deadlines.

Full payment (or a signed agreement to pay from the Parent/Carer – agreed with Head Teacher) must be received before the participation on the trip goes ahead.

Non-payment of the required cost of a trip will result in the following procedure being actioned:

- The pupil will be withdrawn from the trip/activity. Any monies paid will be retained by the travel company/organisation
- Stage 1 debt letter will be issued (see template)
- Stage 2 debt letter will be issued (see template)
- Stage 3 debt letter will be issued (see template)

### **School Meal Debts**

As a school we sub-contract out our catering service to Chartwells the UK's leading school and education catering company. Together we pride ourselves on ensuring our pupils have access to a wide range of nutritious and healthy food throughout the day. This supports our pupils' well-being and enables them to learn and develop effectively.

We recognise that the majority of our families ensure payment for all school meals is made in advance, using the Schoolgateway. However, we have been asked by Chartwells to remind parents/carers about the clear procedures and protocols they have in place (please see below) for those occasions where debt does accumulate on a child's school meal account.

#### **Payment**

Items purchased from the school catering service must be paid for in advance. Parent/carers are able to make payment for school meals using our online secure payment platform Schoolgateway.

<https://login.schoolgateway.com/0/auth/login>

Individual login details will be provided to parents/carers as soon as their child starts at St Alban's. Without sufficient funds on their catering account, pupils will be unable to access the school catering service and parents/carers will be required to send their child into school with a healthy lunch and any snacks required for the full day.

We recognise that on occasions parents/carers may forget to top up their child's catering account and pay in advance for any food. We would not want any child to go hungry and so in this circumstance, school may grant a debt allowance of one meal deal at lunchtime. Following this allowance, parents/carers are asked to ensure that the account is paid in full by the next day and any future meals paid for in advance to ensure pupils have access to a meal on a daily basis.

### **Free School Meals**

Pupils who are entitled to a Free School Meal will be able to access the catering service up to the value of their Free School Meal Allowance, currently £2.60. This will enable pupils to purchase a hot or cold meal deal at lunchtime. Pupils cannot use the allowance to purchase snacks during breaktime. Parents/carers are asked to discuss this with their child to ensure they are clear on what they are required to use the Free School Meal allowance on.

Parents/Carers can if they wish, top up a child's account to enable them to spend above their Free School Meal allowance. Any Free School Meal allowance, or part thereof, not utilised on the day it is allocated will be removed from the pupils account.

If parents/carers believe that their child may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals they should contact Torfaen Council for more details.

<https://www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/EducationLearning/SchoolsColleges/FinancialSupport/Freeschoolmeals/Free-School-Meals.aspx>

### **Schoolgateway Account – Debt Management**

To assist parents/carers in the management of their child's school meal accounts, reminders are set on the system to alert when balances are running low. Parents/carers are strongly encouraged to utilise this facility.

Each week, usually on Friday, school will send out a weekly reminder by email to parents/carers where any sum of money, regardless of amount, is owing on the account.

Parents/carers are asked to clear this debt as soon as possible and provide additional funds to cover any future purchases. Alternatively, parents /carers should send their child to school with a packed lunch until such time as they are able to provide funds onto the school meal account.

Where a debt payment is not received following a further reminder, nor a packed lunch provided, the school will contact the parent/carer to ask them to pay online immediately. Pupils without food in school will be provided with a only meal at lunch time but will not be able to access any other drinks or snacks at either break or lunchtime. This action will further increase the debt on the account.

Where the debt continues to remain unpaid and the balance reaches £10 or more, letters will be sent out to the parents/carers listed as priority one on SIMS. See Appendix 1 and 2.

Where balances are in excess of £10 in debt, no further access will be allowed to the school catering facilities and parents/carers **MUST** provide adequate, healthy food for their child to access during the school day. Failure to do so may be dealt with as a safeguarding matter.

In addition, if the debt continues to remain unpaid to Chartwells they reserve the right to begin legal proceedings against parents/carers to recover the debt. Details of this process can be found in the flowchart at Appendix 3.

It is recognised that the majority of families do ensure that all school meals are paid for in advance. We also understand that circumstances change for some families, over the course of their child's time with us and any parents/carers experiencing difficulties in making payments for school meals are encouraged to contact the school Finance team as soon as possible, to enable appropriate support to be provided.

### **Catering Refunds for pupils who leave in Year 11 (or change schools in other year groups)**

Surplus funds will be requested from Chartwells and returned to parents via the school if the amount exceeds £2.50 per pupil. Alternately, the surplus funds can be transferred to a sibling in the school. This needs to be requested via the Schoolgateway. As Chartwells runs a cashless catering facility at St Alban's, reimbursement will be paid by the school through BACS to the parent/carers bank account. The school will then issue an invoice in arrears to Chartwells.

### **Music Tuition**

Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. All payments are to be made directly to Gwent Music Support Service.

St Albans will continue to offer a 50% subsidy to those students undertaking a music course (GSCE/A Level) where the study of a musical instrument is essential for the course.

### **Transport**

The Governing Body will continue to offer a travel discount to siblings enrolled at the school for the new academic year 2023-24. As was the situation last year, the older sibling/s will travel at no cost and must produce the Discretionary Travel Pass daily. This will be issued by the school office following completion of the relevant application form and submission of a passport size photograph. Bus fare reimbursement will be given to siblings travelling on JENSON TRAVEL LTD, Unit 10 Pontnewynydd Ind Est, Pontnewynydd, Pontypool, NP4 6YW.

The Governing Body have made the decision to phase out the Discretionary Travel Pass scheme, as from September 2024.

## **Breakages and Damage to School Property**

The Governors expect that parents will pay for the cost of repairing school property (books, furniture, etc.) or buildings (windows, doors, etc.) damaged or defaced as a result of that pupil's unreasonable behaviour. An invoice will be issued for the amount and sent to the Parent/Carer through the School Gateway and also in the post if necessary.

## **Remissions**

### **1. Income Support and Family Credit**

Where the parents of a pupil are in receipt of Income Support or Family Credit, the Governing Body will remit in full the cost of board and lodgings for any residential activity that is organised for the pupil if the activity is deemed to take place during school hours, or where it is provided to fulfil the requirements of a prescribed public examination, the National Curriculum or statutory duties relating to religious education.

### **2. Family Hardship**

Where there are cases of family hardship which makes it difficult for pupils to take part in particular activities for which a charge is made, the Governing Body may remit all or part of this charge at the discretion of the Head Teacher. We request that the parent/carer seeks assistance in writing to the Head Teacher.

### **3. Free School Meal (FSM)**

Pupils eligible for FSM are entitled to assistance with the cost of school trips and music tuition which is funded from a Government Grant. Music tuition is fully funded, however, trip contributions are as follows:

Trip Value:

- £100 and under – full cost paid by school
- £100 and above - deposit paid by the school, payment plan option available

We request that the parent/carer seeks assistance in writing through the School Gateway to the Head Teacher/Business Manager, prior to committing to a trip.

## **Lettings**

It is the Policy of the Governors that School premises and facilities shall be available for use by the community outside of school hours. This will be from 4pm – 10pm on school days, all day at weekends and during the school holiday i.e.9am – 10pm. For the purposes of this Policy, the use of School

premises and facilities by organised bodies formed with the sole purpose of supporting the School, e.g. the PTA, will be deemed to be use by the School itself. Use by other bodies associated with the School, e.g. clubs,

associations, etc will be deemed to be use by external bodies. Use of premises and facilities by the School will never be the subject of any charge. Use of premises and facilities by any other agency will always be subject to the charges detailed below, which will be reviewed by the R&R Committee at intervals not exceeding one year.

The booking of all use of premises and facilities, by both internal and external agencies, beyond those detailed in the School Timetable and School Termly Calendar will be the responsibility of the Business Manager, who will maintain a Booking Diary for that purpose. It is the responsibility of all individuals organising events not scheduled in the School Timetable or School Termly Calendar which involve the use of School premises and facilities to submit to the Business Manager a copy of the Booking Request Form. Failure to submit a Booking Request Form sufficiently far in advance is liable to result in the premises or facilities requested not being available for use.

- Upon the receipt of a Booking Request Form, the Business Manager will inform the person making the request that the Booking is confirmed or otherwise.
- The Business Manager will send a Lettings Invoice to the hirer in sufficient time to allow payment to be received prior to the let taking place.
- Where requests are received from external agencies or persons not known to the School a deposit of 25% of the estimated final Invoice will be required before the booking can be confirmed. If a deposit has been received it is acknowledged on the invoice and the amount due reduced accordingly.
- The Business Manager will direct the Caretaker with regard to the security and the cleaning supervisor for cleaning requirements of any booking. The Caretaker will safeguard the premises and facilities of the School by all reasonable means during any booking, and will immediately report to the Business Manager any damage caused.
- Following the Booking, the Business Manager will raise an Invoice for the charges set out at Annex A plus any additional damage charges. The term "damage" shall be deemed to include the causing of unreasonable cleaning requirements following any booking. Any Invoice not settled within 30 days of presentation will be the cause of debtor pursuit action by the Business Manager, by legal means if necessary.
- A pre-numbered receipt is issued to the hirer when the cheque/cash for the balance is received.

## SCHEDULE OF LETTING CHARGES

The following charges will apply from March 2023/24:

Facility	Charge		
	Weekday 4 – 7 pm	Weekday 7 – 10pm	Weekend/school holidays
Classroom	£15 per hour	£25 per hour	£80 per day
Main Hall	£25 per hour	£35 per hour	£150 per day
Drama Workshop	£20 per hour	£30 per hour	£100 per day
Music Room 1	£20 per hour	£30 per hour	£100 per day
Any workshop	£20 per hour	£30 per hour	£100 per day
Gym	£20 per hour (including changing facilities)	£30 per hour (including changing facilities)	£120 per day (including changing facilities)
Tarmac Yard	£20 per hour	£20 per hour	£20 per hour

The charges for the premises and facilities scheduled above are inclusive of Caretaker (security) and normal Cleaning costs. The charges do not include the use of any facilities other than those specified, e.g. the use of the Music Room does not imply the use of any instrument found within it, and the use of the Main Hall does not imply the use of any sporting equipment or musical instrument located therein. The rates for such extras are available on request for inclusion in bookings but any unauthorised use will result in the imposition of an excess charge. The charges for the premises and facilities scheduled above do not include the use of kitchen areas entry to kitchens is normally prohibited under Hygiene and Health & Safety regulations, although should a catering service be required a quotation can be provided. This would be the subject of a separate Invoice. A entertainment licence would need to be obtained independently from TCBC for use of music/alcohol.

NB Charges for other schools / charities are at a 50% discount on the above.

### Photocopying

Occasionally requests are made for photocopying from outside agencies. All costs for printing will be managed centrally, via Finance and will be recharged to agencies on the basis of usage level. Devices are networked to ensure that full information on print volumes is captured correctly. All charges are plus VAT at the standard rate.

The following charges will apply from March 2023:

ITEM	MONO CHARGE	COLOUR CHARGE
A4 Page	1.5p	5p
A3 Page	2p	10p

ITEM	A4	A3	A2
Laminating	10p	15p	20p
Ring Binding	3p	-	-
Thermal binding	20p	-	-

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **LETTER FOR NON-FSM PARENT CANTEEN DEBT**

Parents Address

RE: School meal balance owing as at (Insert date)

Pupil Name – Amount they owe

Dear Parents Name

Further to several recent communications, our records indicate that you still have significant arrears on your child's school meal account.

Unfortunately, until such time as the debt is cleared we must notify you that with effect from (Insert date) you must send your child with a packed lunch and snacks each day as they will not be able to access the catering facilities.

May we take this opportunity to remind you that school meals should be paid for in advance and your account should always be in credit using the Schoolgateway free app or website.

<https://login.schoolgateway.com/0/auth/login>

If you are struggling to make payments due to a change in circumstances and you feel you may be eligible for Free School Meals please check your eligibility by clicking the link here:

<https://www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/EducationLearning/SchoolsColleges/FinancialSupport/Freeschoolmeals/Free-School-Meals.aspx>

If you are eligible please complete an online application form by clicking the link here:

<https://www.torfaen.gov.uk/en/Forms/Request/Free-school-meals/FreeSchoolMeals.aspx>

Please note failure to provide your child with adequate food for the school day may be dealt with under our safeguarding protocols. In addition, should the debt remain unpaid Chartwell's reserves the right to refer the matter to their debt Recovery team.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter, if you wish to discuss further please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

Louise Penny  
Business Manager

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **LETTER FOR FSM PARENT CANTEEN DEBT**

Parents Address

RE: School meal balance owing as at (Insert date)

Pupil Name – Amount they owe

Dear Parents Name

Further to several recent communications, our records indicate that you still have significant arrears on your child's school meal account.

Unfortunately, until such time as the debt is cleared we must notify you that with effect from (Insert date) it will be necessary to limit your child to a hot or cold meal deal at lunchtime in line with their Free School Meal allowance of £2.60.

This will ensure you do not have an increasing debt to clear but will require your child to bring any additional snacks from home should they require these.

May we take this opportunity to remind you that food purchased from the school canteen that is over and above the daily Free School Meal allowance of £2.60 should be paid for in advance and therefore your account should always be in credit using the Schoolgateway free app or website:  
<https://login.schoolgateway.com/0/auth/login>

Should the debt remain unpaid Chartwell's reserves the right to refer the matter to their debt Recovery team.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter, if you wish to discuss further please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

Louise Penny  
Business Manager

**APPENDIX 3**

**DEBT MANAGEMENT FLOWCHART**

