



Charging and Remissions Policy

Date of next Review **Autumn 2023**

This policy applies to the Infant School, including the Nursery and is underpinned by our Equality and Diversity Statement available on the school web site.

The policy will be reviewed to take account of changes to legislation and advice.

Charging and Remissions Policy

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs and visits, can make towards a pupils education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

The relevant statutory provisions are contained in Chapter III of Pt VI of the Education Act 1996. This requires the Governing Body to determine and keep under review a Charging and Remissions Policy. Parents have a right to ask for this information and a summary must be included in the school prospectus. The school must also comply with the Buckinghamshire County Council Scheme for Financing Schools, Finance Section F7 Charges for Educational Activities.

There are two types of financial contributions for which parents can be asked in relation to educational activities:

- Voluntary contributions
- Permitted charges

They have different limitations as set out below.

Voluntary Contributions:

Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or head teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The governing body or head teacher **must** also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it is likely to be cancelled. Schools must make sure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and **not compulsory**.

Schools should avoid sending colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments into the school or maintenance funds. Schools should also ensure that direct debit or standing order mandates are not sent to parents when requesting for contributions.

There is no limit to the level of voluntary contribution, nor is there any restriction on the way in which such contributions may be used. Thus voluntary contributions may be used to subsidise pupils of lesser means and to pay the travel and accommodation costs of accompanying teachers.

Permitted Charges:

Permitted charges are a direct request to cover certain costs involved with a school activity or visit. No charge can be made in respect of education provided during school hours (which excludes the midday break). Furthermore, no charge can be made for any education provided outside of school hours if this forms part of the syllabus for a public exam, or as part of the National Curriculum or religious education (non-chargeable education). A charge may be made however for board and lodgings on any residential educational visit (subject to the provisions of the LA and school's remissions policy).

1. Materials & Textbooks

Where a pupil or parent wishes to retain items produced as a result of art, craft and design, or design and technology, a charge may be levied for the cost of the materials used.

2. Damage/Loss to Property

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower costs as the Headteacher may decide.

3. Lettings

The school will make its facilities available to outside users at a charge of at least the cost of providing the facilities. The scale of charges will be determined annually by the Finance Committee and approved by the Governing Body.

4. Other charges

The Headteacher, Finance Committee or Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services eg. for providing a copy of an OFSTED report.

5. School Lunches - No Charge

6. Debt Policy

If debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents. Every parent will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents give this policy their full support.

Where possible, income due will be collected before or at the time the relevant sale or service is provided.

Uniform must be paid for at the point of sale, or goods can be held in the school office for collection on payment of the full amount. Limited uniform is sold in school.

7. Debt reminders – school meals N/A

8. Persistent Debt

The school purchases Legal Support from the local Authority which includes debt recovery. The school has the option to involve the Legal Services Department of the Council who will write to the parents/carers and expect payment within 7 days. Legal Services have the ability to issue legal proceedings should the family fail to pay by the deadline.

9. Writing off Debt

If after every effort has been made to collect the debt and legal action is considered impractical or has been unsuccessful, individual bad (irrecoverable) debts may be written off in accordance with the following procedures:

- Those up to a value of £100 to be approved by the Headteacher and reported to the next meeting of the Governors Finance Committee.
- Those exceeding £101 to be referred to the Governors Finance Committee for approval.

Remissions Policy

Where non-chargeable education is provided, then the parents of a pupil who is eligible for free school lunch shall receive a complete remission of any charges that would otherwise be payable in respect of board or lodgings.

Under current regulations children whose parents receive the following support payments are eligible for free school meals:

- Income support (IS)
- Income based (not contribution-based) job seekers allowance (IBJSA)
- The Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Income-related employment and support allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit with an annual net earned income of no more than £7400
- Child Tax Credit (with no Working Tax Credit) with an annual income of no more than £16,190