



CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

Member of staff responsible: Lorraine Shaw

Ratified by Governors: 11 October 2023

Next Review Date: October 2024

Review Cycle: Annually

1. POLICY AIMS

This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure we can maintain a good range of visits and activities, and at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of the opportunities.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity over what the school may charge for and what we provide free of charge, to ensure that, during the school day, all children have full and free access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

3. DEFINITIONS

Charge: A fee payable for specifically defined activities and services.

Remission: The cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable.

The school day is defined as:

Nursery

8.30am – 3.30pm

With other specific collections at:

11.30am, 12.30pm, and 2.30pm

KS1

Year 1 and Year 2

8.35am – 3.15pm

Reception

8.35am – 3.15pm

KS2

Year 3

8.35am – 3.15pm

Year 4

8.35am - 3.15pm

Year 5 & 6

8.35am - 3.15pm

Please note that school hours do not include the staggered lunch breaks in the middle of the day.

4. GUIDANCE, LEGISLATION DOCUMENTS AND SCHOOL POLICIES

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England.

It's also based on guidance from the DfE on statutory policies for schools and academy trusts

It complements the school's Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Debt Recovery Policy, Gifts and Hospitality Policy, Lettings Policy, and our Scale of Charges reference document.

4.1 Roles and responsibilities of Headteachers, governors and staff

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy and has delegated this responsibility to the Resources Committee, which will review it annually.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the Charging and Remissions Policy, and that staff apply it consistently. The School Business Manager carries out this task during daily business and operations.

5. WHERE CHARGES CANNOT BE MADE

5.1 Admissions

There is no charge for admission applications to education.

5.2 During the school day

All activities that are a necessary part of the national curriculum including religious education, will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, the supply of books, instruments or other equipment, as well as transport to take pupils between the school and the activity. Voluntary contributions may be requested but in no way hinders a family unable to give. It does not include music or vocal tuition which happens during the day as this is charged for directly to parents.

5.3 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.

Please note - if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal school day, charges may be made. When such activities are arranged parents/carers will be told how the charges have been calculated.

5.4 Examinations

There is no charge for examinations that are part of the curriculum and on the school's set examinations list, where children have been prepared for the examinations by the school.

5.5 Representing the school

There is no charge for clubs where pupils are chosen to represent the school, for example, when playing for the football, netball or athletics teams.

5.6 School meals

Pupils entitled to and registered for Free School Meals (FSM), or Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM), will not be charged for meals provided by the school. Pupils not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount per meal, to be paid for in advance, as decided by the Governing Body.

5.7 Transport

Transport provided in connection to an educational visit, taking pupils to or from the school premises where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport, or where the local authority has arranged for a pupil to be educated cannot be charged for.

6. WHERE CHARGES CAN BE MADE

6.1 Breakfast Club and After School Club

There is a charge for Breakfast and After School Club, and prices are kept as low as possible to allow children to have a healthy meal at the start of their school day. Wrap-around prices are benchmarked across similar provisions in neighbouring schools. Due consideration will be made for looked after children, pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium and for families who experience hardship. However, the school will endeavour to cover the cost of running the club and may need to increase prices in keeping with rising costs.

Parents will have the choice to send their children to these out-of-school-hours activities and must agree to meet the cost for their child to participate. Parents must book their child's place a term in advance, and will be charged for each day booked, using ParentPay/Arbor, even if their child does not attend. Parents must sign to accept Terms and Conditions to use the provision.

Parents eligible for Tax-Free Childcare can [apply online](#) for a childcare account and get up to £500 every 3 months for each child to help with the costs of any of our childcare services. This goes up to £1,000 every 3 months if a child is disabled.

6.2 Damage to property and breakages

Where school property has been wilfully or recklessly damaged by a student *or parent* the school may charge those responsible for some or all the cost of repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a pupil, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all the cost to those responsible.

Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the Headteacher and will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

6.3 Educational materials and resources

The school can charge for any materials, school uniform and accessories, books, music and vocal tuition, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him to own them. It will also charge for the cost of replacement books that have been lost or damaged by pupils.

The school also reserves the right to recover the cost to repair any damage made to school property, or replace equipment, where it is proved that a staff member, contractor, parent, carer, child or visitor has caused the damage, whether intentional or unintentional.

6.4 Examinations

If a pupil fails without good reason to meet an examination requirement, the school may recover the fee incurred from that pupil's parents. This also applies to re-sits.

There is also a charge of the examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school.

6.5 Holiday clubs

Clubs or holiday camps held during the school holidays, either as the main provider, or using an external provider, and will be open to pupils who attend the school as well as children from our local community. Places should be booked in advance to secure a place but if places are available on particular days during the holidays, parents may be able to pay on the day, at the start of the club. Parents will be charged per day for a place for their child even if the child does not attend, and in these circumstances the school will use its discretion to decide whether the full amount is charged or if a discount is appropriate.

6.6 Lettings

Where possible and appropriate, the school will make its facilities available (either directly or through an authorised company) to the community, groups and individuals, giving priority for use with educational, health or wellbeing objectives. See the school's Lettings Policy for more details.

6.7 Lates

The school reserves the right to charge parents and carers for persistent late drop-offs and collections, with warnings issued before action is taken. This also includes late collections at the end of the school or nursery day (according to specific times booked by parents), after sports clubs, and After School Club. Parents will be given a warning letter before late fines are issued or service withdrawal, in line with our zero debt stance.

Children who come to school on time, and are in class on time, feel happy and secure. Children who are collected on time are spared feelings of anxiety. Children arriving late must go to the School Office and register as late for the school's records. This procedure helps us to keep the school running smoothly and helps keep our pupils safe and secure.

6.8 Music Tuition

The law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, however music and vocal tuition, such as, tuition in singing and playing a musical instrument, is an exception to this rule.

Charges may be made for teaching either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size by specialist tutors, provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles, to play a musical instrument or to sing during school hours, if it is provided at the request of the parent and not an essential part of the curriculum.

6.9 Nursery Provision

The school has a nursery for two (until July 2023), and three to four-year olds. Parents of two-year-olds in our provision should produce their funding letter proving receipt of the 15 hours of free early years education, and those with three- and four-year olds are entitled to a minimum of 15 hours a week (mornings or afternoons) of free universal early years provision for 38 weeks of the year. The school receives funding to cover the cost of making this provision from the local authority through the early year's single funding formula. Some families are eligible for 30 hours of early years education funding but must apply online by visiting www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

Parents who are not eligible for the additional 15 hours of government funding, can pay the school directly using ParentPay or through Arbor's Payment Plus, for extra hours to allow them the flexibility and support to study or work over a longer time during the day. The allocation of places to parents paying for additional hours will be at the discretion of the Headteacher. We will benchmark our proposed costs against other early years providers and consider the affordability for our families while making sure to cover all our costs.

Parents and carers who pay for the additional 15 hours, must sign an agreement to pay their nursery fees on the scheduled dates, which will be provided by the school at the start of the academic year, new term or half term, as appropriate. One signed copy of this document will be retained by the parent or carer and the other copy will be kept on file. If the nursery fees are not paid by the dates prescribed in the schedule, the parent must renegotiate their child's placement and they may be given an AM or PM placement using their universal 15 hours of free provision at the school's discretion.

Parents will also be able to pay for additional extensions to their child's day by including lunchtime supervision for an additional hour on top of their AM or PM placement, an extra hour from 2.30pm to 3.30pm for families in receipt of 30 hours of free childcare, as well as breakfast and afterschool club provision to top-and-tail the school day.

6.10 Optional extras and activities outside of the school day

The headteacher will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities. These may include, sports, science, arts or ICT clubs, or materials, books and instruments that the parent wishes their child to keep or own (the cost will be made clear to the parent before the charge is made in all cases).

The school provides a range of extra-curricular activities and optional extras which are not part of the national curriculum or religious education, nor a part of an examination syllabus. These extras include the cost for staff, the hire of vehicles or accommodation to provide the optional extras as a way of increasing pupil engagement, improving learning opportunities either side of the school day, and improving pupil outcomes to narrow gaps between pupils from different backgrounds.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be based on parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The school will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

The school will consider cases of hardship on a case by case basis. It will use its discretion to offer reductions or remissions, for optional activities outside of the school day, to children who are in care or eligible for Pupil Premium funding.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. In no circumstances will there be an element of subsidy required for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. However, this may mean that the activity cannot take place.

6.11 Professional services

The school will charge for professional services to other schools, academies, companies and organisations, including ICT, Positive Handling, Maths Mastery expertise, the use of experienced teaching and support staff (in the capacity of advisor or consultant) and any product created by Bush Hill Park Primary School staff using school resources.

6.12 Residential trips/activities

Charges will be made for board and lodging and activities undertaken on residential stays. The school cannot provide financial support for those families unable to pay for such residential trips. However, a special programme of activities will be offered by the school to those children who do not take part in a residential stay and where that stay takes place in term time on normal school days.

A voluntary contribution may be requested towards the cost of these activities, but no child will be prevented from participating because their parents or carers cannot or will not contribute.

Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside of school hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per pupil. These charges may not apply to those pupils entitled to remissions, but no other pupils will be charged extra to cover those costs.

6.13 School meals

Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount per day, to be paid in advance, as decided by the Governing Body.

6.14 Additional materials and study aids

Optional study aids may be offered to parents before examinations, who can choose whether or not to purchase recommended items, like SATS revision books.

The school also allows parents, who wish to, to purchase uniform accessories like hats, book bags and sun caps from the School Office.

7. 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, divided by the total number of pupils participating. Final costs charged will be rounded up to the nearest pound.

7.1 Remissions and concessions

Support for cases of hardship will come through fundraising or income for disadvantaged pupils (Pupil Premium). Parents or carers who qualify for support are those who are in receipt of Income Support, Child Tax Credit, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, Guaranteed Element of Pension Credit, Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit, Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance, or Universal Credit.

Children of families who receive these payments may also be entitled to free school meals. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors will consider and be responsible for authorising the remission of charges, and will deal with each case confidentially.

The school may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and pupils, and this will be determined by the governing body and Headteacher.

There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who cannot.

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

7.2 Inability or unwillingness to pay

We are committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all pupils, so no child is excluded from an activity because parents or carers are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it will be cancelled. The identity of pupils or parents/carers of the child who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed.

8. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs which might not otherwise be possible. For example, for cooking materials, a theatre group performance or science or history presentation or visits to museums or other locations, including transport costs. If the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Headteacher will make this clear to parents at the outset.

There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will 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 the activity or visit will be cancelled and monies paid returned to the parents and carers.

9. REFUNDS

Request for refunds for trips will be considered on an individual basis and may be rejected if the school is unable to recoup the costs incurred.

In all cases of withdrawal, either voluntarily or otherwise, applications should be made in writing to the headteacher. If approved, refunds will be processed via the original method of payment.

The school reserves the right not to refund costs where a pupil is withdrawn from an activity by the school because of a pupil's breach of the school's Behaviour Policy.

10. ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Resources Committee will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving on a yearly basis a financial report on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, any remissions or subsidies awarded (without giving names) and the source of any subsidies.

11. COMPLAINTS

Complaints about the implementation of this policy or any decisions taken in line with the policy will be considered as part of the school's complaints procedures.