



# Charging and Remission Policy

## May 2024

### Statutory policy

#### Policy Review

This policy was adopted, reviewed and agreed by the Governing Board on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024

It is due for review in Spring 2025 (up to 1 year from the above date).

Signature Chair of Governors:

Mrs K Redrup

*All the governors and staff of Binstead Primary School are committed to sharing a common objective to help keep the children and staff of the school community safe. We ensure that consistent effective safeguarding procedures are in place in order to support families, children and staff of the school.*

#### Revision Record

| Revision No. | Date Issued  | Prepared By | Approved   | Comments            |
|--------------|--------------|-------------|------------|---------------------|
| 1            | January 2021 |             | Y          |                     |
| 2            |              | RC          | March 2023 | Debt Recovery Added |
| 3            | May 2024     | AD          |            | No changes          |

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### **1. Aims**

Our school aims to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made

### **2. Legislation and guidance**

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

### **3. Definitions**

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities

Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

### **4. Roles and responsibilities**

#### **4.1 The governing board**

The governing board has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

The governing board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

Monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the Finance Committee.

#### 4.2 Headteachers

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

#### 4.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently

Notifying the headteacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The school will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

#### 4.4 Parents

Parents are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

### **5. Where charges cannot be made**

Below we set out what we cannot charge for:

#### 5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- 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
  - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
  - Religious education
  - Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent
  - Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school
  - Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

#### 5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated

- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

### 5.3 Residential visits

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of:
  - a) The national curriculum
  - b) A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
  - c) Religious education
  - d) Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit

## 6. **Where charges can be made**

Below we set out what we can charge for:

### 6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him or her to own them
- Optional extras (see below)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities

### 6.2 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment.

The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
  - a) The national curriculum
  - b) A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
  - c) Religious education
  - d) Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
  - e) Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)

- f) Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- g) Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions)
- When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to:
  - a) Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
  - b) The cost of buildings and accommodation
  - c) Non-teaching staff
  - d) Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra)
  - e) The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra
  - f) Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.
  - g) Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.
  - h) In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.
  - i) Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

### 6.3 Music tuition

- Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent.
- Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil who is looked after by a local authority

## 6.4 Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

## 7. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities during school hours which would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which the school may ask parents for voluntary contributions include:

School trips, additional experiences brought into the classroom (ie workshops), Theatre visits into school, transport to sporting events (eg swimming)

There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay.

If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.

## 8. Remissions

In some circumstances the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

### 8.1 Remissions for residential visits

Parents who can prove they are in receipt of any of the following benefits may be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging for residential visits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's annual gross income does not exceed £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (this is paid for 4 weeks after an individual stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit (if the application was made on or after 1 April 2018, the family's income must be less than £7,400 per year – after tax and not including any benefits)

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

The School Business Manager monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by The Headteacher Annually.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the The Governing Body.

## 10. Debt Recovery Policy

The school will take all reasonable measures to vigorously collect debts as part of its management of public funds. A debt will be written off only after all reasonable measures (commensurate with the size and nature of the debt) have been taken to recover it.

### 10.1 Reporting of outstanding debt levels

- The Head teacher will ensure that the level of outstanding debt is regularly monitored.
- Suitable records will be maintained to detail individual debts and the total value of debt to the school in order that it can be determined at any time and reported to the SBM & *Headteacher*
- The SBM & *Headteacher* will review the level of outstanding debts every *half term* to determine whether this level is acceptable and whether action to recover debts is effective.

10.2 Where payment from the parent/guardian has not been received in advance, or 'at the point of sale', the following process should be applied.

- ***Initial 'overdue payment' reminder*** - An initial reminder will be sent weekly via Parent Pay
- ***First 'overdue payment' reminder letter*** - A formal reminder statement should be issued 2 weeks after the informal *reminder / the date of supply*.
- ***Second 'overdue payment' reminder letter*** - A second reminder letter will be issued 2 weeks after the First Reminder Letter.
- ***Failure to respond to reminders / settle a debt*** - If after 2 reminders, a response or payment is not received, a letter will be sent to the debtor advising them that the matter will be referred to the school's legal advisers.

At the discretion of the Governing Body / Finance Committee / Headteacher the debtor may be advised that they will be required to pay in advance for all future supplies or the supply will no longer be available to them.

This decision and its basis will be recorded and reported to the Governing Body / Finance Committee

### 10.3 Negotiation of repayment terms

Debtors are expected to settle the amount owed by a single payment as soon as possible after receiving the first 'overdue payment' reminder.

**However, if people are unable to pay;**

The School may reduce or cancel a debt in certain circumstances. A sensitive approach to debt recovery will be carried out, taking the following factors into account.

- Hardship – where paying the debt would cause financial hardship.
- Ill health – where our recovery action might cause further ill health.
- Time – where the debt is so large compared to the person's income that it would take an unreasonable length of time to pay it all off.
- Cost – where the value of the debt is less than the cost of recovering it.
- Multiple debt – where someone owes more than one debt to the School. In this situation an attempt to agree one repayment plan to include all debts will be established.