

Charging and Remissions Policy

Bierton CE Combined School



This policy was dated: January 2026

This policy is to be reviewed by: January 2027

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Introduction

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs and visits, can make towards a pupil's 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.

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 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.

Roles and responsibilities

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.

Headteacher

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

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.

Parents

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

Definitions

- Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

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 must be cancelled. If a trip is cancelled within six weeks of the scheduled visit, families will not be refunded for the trip as the school will still be required to pay the place as per the providers policy. School will make this clear to parents when advertising the trip. 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).

Optional Extras:

The school may charge parents for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of the school time that is not:
 - Part of the national curriculum.
 - Part of a syllabus of prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepare for at the school.
 - Religious education.
- Transport, other than that arranged by the local authority for the pupil to be provided with education.
- Board and Lodgings for a pupil on a residential visit.
- Extended day services offered to pupils.

When calculating the cost of optional extras, the school will take into account the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- The employment of non-teaching staff
- The cost of teaching staff (including teaching assistants) under contract for services purely to provide the optional extra
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Late Collection of children

In the event that the parent/carer is running late or has made alternative collection with a friend/relative, they should phone the school office by 3pm to advise us of those changes so that both the school and the child are aware.

If collection is not made before 3:30pm, the child will be placed into BOSC (Bierton Out of School Club) and the parent will be charged for the whole session (As per Current BOSC Charges). This does not mean that the child has a place in this club from that point onwards.

If collection is not made from after school clubs before 4:30pm, the child will be placed in BOSC (Bierton Out of School Club) and the parent will be charged for the whole session (As per Current BOSC Charges).

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. In the case of Food Technology, pupils usually provide their own ingredients, but if the pupil forgets, the school provides the ingredients and levies a charge. Textbooks are provided free of charge, but in some subjects, additional revision guides are available, for which a charge is made.

Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Education to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The new Regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental 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. Guidance about these changes to the charging regulations can be viewed [here](#). Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).

Residential Activities/Activities Outside of School Hours

If the activity is held outside school hours and is education other than non-chargeable education, then it is regarded as an "optional extra". A charge may be made for the full cost of the activity but must not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity. The charge may include the costs of travel, board and lodgings, additional staff costs, entrance fees, insurance, materials and equipment. However, the charge made to

individual parents cannot include any cost added to subsidise parents of children who are unwilling or unable to pay the charge.

The Governing Body has agreed for payments to be paid for at the time of booking for any 'optional extra' activities provided by the school and no refunds will be offered for sickness or holidays unless in exceptional circumstances.

When is an activity held in school hours?

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, Regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A "half day" means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Example 1: Visit during school hours

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

Example 2: Visit outside school hours

Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

Hot School Meals

As part of the Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) the school currently provides hot school meals for all funded pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1 at no cost to parents.

Hot Meals are also provided to pupils entitled to Free School Meals (FSM) in all key stages at no cost to parents.

Key Stage 2 (KS2) pupils can also obtain a hot meal but these have to be funded by the parents and are payable via ParentMail at the current charge per meal as determined by the Meal provider annually.

To cut costs and wastage, all the hot meals must be ordered in advance using ParentMail to access the menus published by the school. All ordered meals are non-refundable, as the school is unable to claim back the cost from the meal provider. Therefore, parents/carers will be charged in full if a meal is not taken for any reason.

School Closure

If our school is advised or forced to close by the Local Authority or DfE, we will not be able to refund parents for hot school meal orders as the school will have already ordered the ingredients. However, if our school is closed due to any reason localised to our setting, e.g. no heating or water, then we will reimburse parents for school meal orders. If your child is due to be on a trip when school is forced to close then we will endeavour to re-arrange the trip for another day.

Examination Entries

A charge will be levied in respect of examination entries for pupils where the school has not prepared the pupil for the examination.

A charge will be levied in respect of examination entries for pupils where

- the school has prepared the pupil for the examination and
- it considers that for educational reasons the pupil should not be entered and

- the pupil's parent/guardian wishes the pupil to be entered (or pupil him/herself when over 18 years old). In these circumstances, if the pupil subsequently passes the examination, the school may refund the cost.

A charge may be levied for pupils re-sitting an examination.

A charge will be levied where a pupil fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the school paid or agreed to pay the entry fee.

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 cost as the Headteacher may decide.

Lettings

The school may 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.

Other charges

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

Remissions Policy

Where non-chargeable education is provided during a residential visit, parents in receipt of certain benefits (broadly equivalent to those which qualify pupils for Free School Meals) shall receive a remission of any charges that would otherwise be payable in respect of board or lodgings.

Government guidance providing details of the benefits which exempt parents from being charged can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities>

Where charges are to be made by the governing body for optional extras, parents may receive a remission for the whole or part of the charge.

Implementation and Monitoring:

Implementation, operational monitoring and evaluation responsibility: Headteacher.

Monitoring, including impact on pupil attainment, responsibility: Governing Body.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed annually or more frequently as necessary.

Date January 2026