

Wheatfield Primary School

'Growing and Learning Together'

Charging and Remissions Policy

(Statutory Policy)

Issue No 3

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CHANGE RECORDS SHEET

Issue No.	Date	Summary of Change	Amended by
Draft 1	02/07/10	Rewritten and changed styling of document.	D Phillips
Draft 2	06/07/10	Added Lunch Section.	D Phillips
1	31/01/12	Added Dispute section.	D Phillips
2	October 2014	Reviewed and updated.	C Dursley
3	April 2016	Reviewed and updated to reflect changes in the school's responsibility to absorb all dinner money debt. All changes are highlighted in the left hand column.	D Hickson

SUMMARY

This policy should be read in conjunction with all other school policies. If you require further details of this policy then please refer to the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or updated as and when changes occur. This is to be recorded in the minutes of the Staffing and Resources Committee.

REFERENCES

The Education Act 1996: Sections 402, 449–462.

The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) Regulations 1989: SI 1989/377.

The Education (Residential Trips) (Prescribed Tax Credits) (England) Regulations 2003: SI 2003/381.

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995: SI 1995/2089 (as amended by the Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) Regulations 1997: SI 1997/2004, and by the Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2001: SI 2001/2008).

The School Information (England) Regulations 2008 (as amended).

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MAIN DOCUMENT

1 RATIONALE

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities and visits can contribute towards pupils' education. In so doing, however, it acknowledges that it must remain within the legislation governing charging for such activities as outlined in Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996, as well as subsequent information provided by the DFE in 1999, 2003 and 2008.

2 AIMS

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide activities, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as optional activities, whilst at the same time ensuring:

- The right of every child to free, state education is maintained.
- Equality of opportunity enables all pupils to access the educational experiences being offered.

3 GUIDELINES

It is, therefore, the policy of the Governing Body:

- To charge the appropriate fee to parents making use of the school's child care provision, known as Wheatfield Plus.
- To request the appropriate charge from parents for all board and lodging requirements on residential visits, except from those in receipt of one of the following, when a grant to offset the costs will be awarded:
 - Income Support;
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
 - support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
 - Child Tax Credit (providing that they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, that does not exceed £16,040 for the year 2009–10);
 - the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit; and
 - an income-related employment and support allowance (this benefit was introduced on 27 October 2008).
- To charge for activities organised wholly or mainly outside school hours, where appropriate.
- To charge pupils for the cost of any individual or small group instrumental tuition provided by the Music Service.
- To charge for ingredients or materials for cookery or craft work or require them to be provided, if the parents have indicated in advance, that they wish to own the finished product.
- To request contributions from parents for activities in school time, such as visits from theatrical groups, which can only run if there is sufficient voluntary funding, whilst ensuring that no pupil is debarred solely by the ability or unwillingness of parents to pay. In the event of insufficient voluntary contributions being forthcoming activities or visits will be cancelled.

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- To ensure that on occasions where charges may be levied, no pupil is disadvantaged solely by their parent's ability to meet the cost.
- To require parents to pay for wilful damage to or loss of school property for which their children are responsible where reimbursement is appropriate.
- Parents will be provided with the opportunity to discuss any financial problems associated with paying for any activity with the Head and/or Class Teacher in complete confidence.

The Governing Body may, from time to time, amend the categories of activity for which a charge should be made.

4 REMISSIONS

Where the parents of a pupil are in receipt of Income Support or Family Credit, there may be cases of family hardship, which makes it difficult for pupils to take part in particular activities for which a charge is made. In such circumstances when arranging a chargeable activity, the Governing Body will invite parents to apply in confidence for the remission of charges in part or full. The Head Teacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors will make authorisation of remission. The funds available for remissions are very limited so that activities, which would exceed the remission budget, may have to be cancelled. All children, however, who are designated as 'disadvantaged' i.e. have additional funding due to the Pupil Premium grant, will receive a minimum of 50% towards the cost of all activities for which a charge is sought.

5 SCHOOL MEALS

It is the parent/guardians responsibility to ensure that each child has an adequate food provision at lunchtime.

Children's lunches can take the form of a packed lunch from home or as a school provided meal.

School meals, other than for children in YR, Y1 and Y2, and those children in KS2 entitled to free school meals (via the UK benefit authorities), will be provided on **prepayment** of an annually set charge for each meal.

It is therefore school policy that:

- All payment should be made in advance on the Monday of each week at the latest. In the event of sickness, payment should be made on the return of the child to school.
- Payments can be made for the whole or part of each term in advance.
- The value of meals not taken due to illness or educational visits will be held in credit for each child and rolled forward to the next term or refunded if requested.
- Online electronic payments are the preferred method of payment for school meals. However, for the time being, cash or cheque payments are acceptable. All payments should be made in a sealed envelope, with the pupil's name and class clearly written on the front. The school is unable to provide a small change service.
- If a child has to leave school without prior agreement after 10.30am e.g. due to illness, then no credit can be given for that day's meal, as preparation will have begun. Subsequent days will be credited for each child, assuming notification of absence occurs before 10.30am.

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- Parents experiencing difficulties in paying and not eligible for free school dinners should make an appointment to discuss the matter with the head teacher as soon as possible.

5.1 PAYMENT ARREARS

The procedure for arrears will be as follows:

- £10 – a reminder text will be sent to the home address
- Once more than one weeks dinner arrears have occurred, parents and carers will be contacted by letter and text to inform them that their child must bring a packed lunch into school until the debt has been cleared. If a child books a meal whilst this debt remains will result in the parents being contacted to request that they bring in a packed lunch for the child. At no time will the child be informed that there is a problem and the school will ensure that every child has a lunch.
- £50 lunch arrears will result in action being taken, by the school, through the Small Claims Court.

6 DISPUTES & APPEALS

- An appeal to the Finance and Resources Committee can be made after steps 1 and 2 of the Payment Arrears procedure.
- The Finance and Resources Committee may refer the appeal to the full Governing Body.
- All subsequent appeals must follow those as stipulated by the school or the Small Claims Court.