



CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

2024/25

HEADTEACHER: ALEX BRAMLEY

Introduction

All education, during school hours, is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum except for individual music tuition.

Voluntary Contributions

When organising school trips or visits, which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the trip. All Contributions are voluntary, however if we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel the trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children any differently from any others.

If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. Sometimes the school pays additional costs to support the visit. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded, and the school can provide this information on request.

The following is a list of additional activities organised by the school which require voluntary contributions from parents.

This list is not exhaustive:

- Visits to Museums and Theatres
- Sporting activities which require transport expenses
- Forest Schools activities
- School trips
- Musical events

Residential Visits

If the school organises a residential visit in school time or mainly school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, we do not make any charge for the education. However, we do make a charge to cover the costs of board, lodging and transport expenses. If parents are experiencing financial difficulty they are invited to ask to speak to privately, or write in confidence, to the Head Teacher or School Business Manager.

Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for children in Key Stage 2. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We currently make no charge for this activity and inform parents when these lessons are to take place. We ask parents for their written permission for their child to take part in swimming lessons.

Dinner Money Policy

The Marsh Lane Primary School Debt Policy has been adopted to ensure that a consistent and fair approach is taken towards debt incurred by parents/carers whose children take school dinners. As the Local Education Authority is no longer accountable for the administration of dinner money debt the responsibility now falls on the school to pursue instances of non-payment. As a result, the school budget will have to directly fund any outstanding debts that cannot be recovered thereby directly affecting the amount of money that is available to provide education to all pupils.

Provision of School Meals

The School's Meals Service is no different to any other business in that meals must be paid for by someone. Free School Meals are available for parents who meet certain criteria including the receipt of state benefits. Anyone who may qualify for Free School Meals should contact the school office for further information. Free School Meals are a statutory right, and it is important that all parents/carers who qualify take up their child's entitlement so that they can receive a school meal each day.

Information on the entitlement to free school meals can be found on the Derbyshire County Council's website www.derbyshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals applications can be made online or through a form from the school office.

If a child's entitlement to free school meals expires or the parents/carers personal circumstances change the parent/carer must provide a packed lunch or send payment in advance for a school dinner.

Currently, Infant school age children are entitled to Universal Free School Meals; this cost is met by the government and may be extended in the future to older age groups. Parents/carers will be informed of any changes to this scheme as they arise.

Cost of School Meals

School meals are available to children at a cost of £3.25 (correct as of 01.9.24) per day or at no cost to those in receipt of Free School Meals entitlement. School meals **must** be paid for in advance. The school will endeavour to inform parents of any changes to the cost in school's meals as soon as this is known.

Payment for School Meals

We ask that payments for meals are made daily or weekly for the meals taken by children. We encourage this to be paid in advance of the meal being taken in school and paid for through ParentPay.

Management of School Meal Debts

To ensure that the school's budget is not adversely affected by the cost of School meal debt, the Governors consider the fairest system to all families is to pursue a 'Zero Tolerance' approach. Although, this may seem harsh to some parents it is important that the school budget is spent for the benefit of all our pupils and not a small number.

If a child arrives at school without a packed lunch or payment, or if a child's entitlement to free school dinners has ceased, the school will telephone/text the parent/carer in the first instance to establish if alternative arrangements have been made.

When a child has failed to produce dinner money the school may allow a meal to be provided where it is felt that this is a temporary situation. e.g. Lost or forgotten dinner money, temporary hardship etc. however details should be recorded in writing and a record maintained and monitored.

If a child takes a school meal which has not been paid for, a letter/text detailing how much is owed will be sent to the parent/carer requesting payment directly to the school within 7 days. Prompt action will be taken to address any debt issue at an early stage to prevent arrears amassing.

Where a child continues to require meals, the school must establish if the child is entitled to free school meals, or if the parent/carer is experiencing hardship which affects their ability to pay. Under these circumstances the parent/carer should be invited to apply for free school meals or speak confidentially to the Head Teacher.

When the debt exceeds £10 for a *child the school office will make contact to chase payment,*

If the debt exceeds £30 for a family and/or action proves unsuccessful in securing dinner money arrears, the School should formally write to the parent/carer, explaining that the School is not obliged to provide a school dinner where advance payment is not forthcoming or where authorisation for free school dinners has not been received and that they should provide a packed lunch to prevent further arrears. The school should also inform the safeguarding team.

Monitoring and Recovery of School Meal Debts

At each meeting of the Governing Body/Finance Committee, the Head Teacher will provide Governors with details of any outstanding dinner money debt and the current position regarding such debt. The aim of the School's Dinner Money Policy is to minimise the opportunity for debt balances to build up and incurring costly referral to the school's solicitors. The school does however, reserve the right to begin legal proceedings to recover outstanding school meal debts and inform the local authority that a child is not being provided with a suitable meal at lunch time.

All Write-offs of outstanding debt must be approved by the Governing Body/Finance Committee following submission of details of the debt by the Head Teacher together with reasons for no further action being taken.

Lettings Policy

Introduction

Section 42 of the 1986 Education Act provides for the Governing Body of a school with delegated budgets to have control over use of the school's premises outside school hours, subject to directions by the LEA (further details can be found in the 1988 Education Act) and to the statutory requirements of any other Act and having regard to the desirability of use by the local community.

The use of premises outside school hours is delegated to Governing Bodies in accordance with Education Committee's Regulations for the letting of school premises R9. The Education Reform Act requires that finances be delegated for statutory school activities, i.e. Community Education, LEA initiatives etc, and that this delegation is subject to any direction issued by the LEA to maintain community provision.

Charges to Parents

A charge may be made for any activity that takes place mainly or entirely outside of school hours.

For breakfast club the charge is currently £5.00 per child per session.

For external after school clubs the charge is currently £3.50 per session.

For after school care the charge is £6 for 1 ½ hours and a light snack and drink will be provided. Please note for children collected after 3.45pm parents will be charged £6 for their child to attend the after-school care provision where applicable.

There will also be a £10 charge for late pick-ups from after school care (after 5.00pm).

All concerts require a ticket at a charge of £3.00 but this is to be reviewed by Governors.

All children eligible for pupil premium may be exempt from some of the above charges.

Lettings

Lettings can be arranged with prior notice. Charges would depend on the length of time required.

Rents

Rent of school rooms can be arranged with prior notice. Charges would depend on the length of time required.

Associated Policies: (included within the **Charging Policy**)

**Dinner Money Policy
Lettings Policy**

Date approved by the Governing Body Oct 2024

Date to be reviewed by the Governing Body: October 2025

Signed:

Chair of the Governing Body