

Charging and Remissions Policy

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History of policy changes and review

Author: Finance & Business Development Manager

Authorising Body: FGB

Review Period: Annual

Next Review Date: September 2026

Date	Change	Details
July 2013	Policy created	
January 2016	Reviewed	Addition of statement highlighted in blue (residential trips) p4
March 2017	Reviewed – No Change	
November 2020	Reviewed	Re-formatted Inclusion of Link to DfE Guidance
July 2024	Updated	Review frequency updated to annually Note about residential trips – now undertaken occasionally, p4
February 2025	Updated	Re-formatted Legal framework, Definitions & Roles and responsibilities sections added, in line with 2024 DfE guidance
September 2025	Updated	Minor change to legislation reference, additional references to breakfast schemes and assistance with costs.

Statement of Intent

Briarwood School is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances. This policy will ensure we adhere to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities and meet all statutory guidance provided by the DfE. The school will ensure that this policy is published on its website and provides the school community with details of activities for which the school will charge parents, and the circumstances in which they will waive any charge parents would otherwise expect to pay.

The governing body recognises the valuable contribution a wide range of additional activities and trips can make towards pupils personal and social education. We believe all of our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities (curricular and extra-curricular) irrespective of their parent/carer's financial means.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2025) 'Maintained schools governance guide'
- DfE (2024) 'What maintained schools must or should publish online'
- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- Freedom of Information Act 2000

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Data Protection Policy
- Finance Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions will be used:

Charge - a fee payable for specifically defined activities.

Remission - the cancellation of a charge, partly or wholly, which would normally be payable.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- The management of the school's delegated finances
- Ensuring the school acts in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Ensuring money is spent for the educational benefit of pupils attending the school, and for the benefit of pupils in other schools.

- Recognising its legal requirements regarding charging for school activities under the Education Act 1996 and meeting all additional guidance provided by the DfE.

The Executive Headteacher will be responsible for:

- Prioritising and allocating financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds.
- Informing parents on low incomes and in receipt of specific benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.
- Liaising with parents and staff regarding any charges being applied and making decisions regarding appropriate remissions on a case-by-case basis.

The Head of Operations, and their team, will:

- Process and record payments for activities, taking into account any remissions applied.
- Ensure that the correct invoices or voluntary payment details are sent to parents, and that payment is receipted when received.

Guidelines: Charging

Charging does not apply to parents who are in receipt of:

- 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 you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

No charges will be made for:

- Any activities which are essential to fulfilling the Curriculum.
- Education during school hours.
- Breakfast clubs immediately before the start of the school day.
- The exception to this is residential educational visits. A residential activity taking place largely during school time can be subject to charges in relation to board and lodgings. These charges will not exceed the actual cost. *Please note*, we do not regularly offer residential educational visits but it is a chargeable activity when it is available. Parents may be asked to make a voluntary contribution.

Activities that take place outside of school hours

Charges may be requested to cover the cost of any activities that take place outside of school hours. No charge made in respect of individual pupils will exceed the cost of providing the activity for that pupil. Charges will not include an element of staffing costs; these will always be met through the school budget.

To request assistance, parents should contact the Head of School.

Guidelines: Voluntary Contributions

Parents may be invited to make voluntary contributions to cover the cost of activities which are deemed educationally desirable. This may include activities such as:

- Visiting performers who levy a direct charge on the school (theatre/dance/music groups).
- School educational visits (the proportionate costs for an individual child to meet the costs for travel,
- Materials and equipment, entrance fees, insurance costs).
- An 'end product that may be taken home' e.g. cookery ingredients.
- Residential activity trips

Requests for voluntary contributions will make it clear that:

- There will be no obligation to contribute.
- No child will be excluded from an activity or treated differently should a contribution not be made on their behalf.
- No parent/carer will be asked to subsidise another child in any activity where contributions are requested.
- The activity might not take place or may be cancelled if voluntary contributions are not made.

The following clause will be inserted into all letters when requesting voluntary contributions:

"Whilst there is no charge for your child's education there are a limited number of extra activities that can be met by school funds. There is no obligation to contribute and children will not be prevented from participating should you choose not to make a contribution. However, if there are insufficient voluntary contributions some activities may not take place. In the case of financial difficulty, please do not hesitate to see the Headteacher in strictest confidence."

Guidelines: Remissions

Where parents/carers of a pupil would like their child to participate in an additional or optional activity, for which a charge is being made or a voluntary contribution requested, and feel their financial circumstances are insufficient to meet the cost of the activity, the Governing Body will invite parents to discuss the matter in confidence with the Executive Headteacher, with a view to remitting all or part of the cost.

The Governing Body requires that the Charging and Remissions Policy holds no pupil at a disadvantage. If any parent applies for remission of a charge for any school activity the Executive Headteacher, in consultation with the Chair of Governors, will make decisions regarding the remission. A subsidy may be provided from the school fund, or other alternative income sources such as donations or relevant grants, at the discretion of the Headteacher and Chair of Governors.

Appendices, references and links

Links

DfE Charging for School Activities Guidance 2018

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