

FINANCE AND ACCESS

Charging, Refunds and Remissions Policy

Clear, fair and accessible arrangements for school activities



Policy Status: Statutory
Approved by Governing Body: Autumn 2026
Review Date: Autumn 2027
Policy Owner: Headteacher

1. Aims

Great Leighs Primary School is committed to providing all pupils with access to a broad, balanced and enriching education. We recognise that educational visits, visitors, clubs and residential experiences make an important contribution to pupils' personal development and curriculum enrichment.

The Governing Body acknowledges the requirements of the Education Act 1996 and will ensure that:

- No child is excluded from an educational activity because of their family's financial circumstances.
- Charges are only made where permitted by legislation.
- Parents and carers are treated fairly and consistently.
- Remission arrangements are available for eligible families.
- Requests for financial support are handled sensitively and confidentially.

2. Legislative Framework

This policy is based upon:

- Sections 449–462 of the Education Act 1996.
- Department for Education guidance: *Charging for School Activities*.
- Relevant DfE statutory guidance relating to school governance and financial management.
[\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#), [\[assets.pub...ice.gov.uk\]](#)

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Approving this policy.
- Monitoring implementation.
- Ensuring compliance with relevant legislation.

Headteacher

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- Ensuring this policy is implemented consistently.
- Determining charges within the framework agreed by governors.
- Considering requests for remission confidentially and fairly.
- Reporting significant charging and remission decisions to governors where appropriate.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy when planning activities.
 - Informing parents of any charges or voluntary contributions in advance.
 - Alerting the Headteacher to any concerns regarding implementation.
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4. Definitions

Charge

A fee payable for a specific activity or service.

Remission

The reduction, cancellation or exemption of a charge that would otherwise be payable.

Voluntary Contribution

A contribution requested from parents and carers towards an activity where charges cannot legally be made.

5. Activities for Which Charges May Be Made

The school may charge for:

5.1 School Meals

Charges will be made for meals taken by pupils who are not entitled to:

- Universal Infant Free School Meals; or
- Benefits-related Free School Meals.

Meal prices will be reviewed periodically by the Governing Body.

5.2 Residential Visits

For a residential visit taking place mainly during school hours, the school may charge only for board and lodging, subject to the statutory remission below. Travel, education and activity costs will be funded by the school or requested as voluntary contributions unless they qualify as an optional extra.

Parents will be informed of costs before bookings are confirmed.

5.3 Music Tuition

Charges may be made for individual or small-group instrumental or vocal tuition provided at parental request and which is not part of the National Curriculum.

Charges will not exceed the actual cost incurred by the school.

5.4 Optional Extras

Charges may be made for activities which are not part of:

- The National Curriculum;
- Religious Education;
- A public examination syllabus; or
- Education provided during school hours.

Examples include:

- Certain after-school clubs;
 - Specialist coaching;
 - Instrumental tuition;
 - External enrichment activities provided outside school hours.
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5.5 Wraparound Care

Charges apply for:

- Breakfast Club;
- After-School Club;
- Holiday provision (where applicable).

Charges are detailed in the relevant club agreements and published separately.

5.6 Loss or Damage

The school may seek reimbursement for:

- Lost books or equipment;
- Damage to school property caused through wilful or reckless behaviour;
- Costs incurred through damage to third-party property where the school becomes liable.

Each case will be considered individually by the Headteacher.

6. Activities for Which Charges Cannot Be Made

No charge will be made for:

- Education provided during school hours.
- Admission to the school.

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment required for lessons.
 - Education provided outside school hours where it forms part of the National Curriculum.
 - Education provided outside school hours that forms part of Religious Education.
 - Transport provided in connection with educational activities where legislation requires transport to be provided free of charge.
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7. Educational Visits and Voluntary Contributions

The school may seek voluntary contributions towards the cost of:

- Educational visits;
- Visitors and workshops;
- Curriculum enhancement activities.

There is no obligation for parents or carers to contribute and pupils will not be excluded if their parents or carers choose not to contribute.

However, where insufficient voluntary contributions are received and the shortfall cannot reasonably be met from school funds, the school reserves the right to cancel the activity.

Any request for voluntary contributions will make it clear that:

- Contributions are voluntary;
 - Parents are under no obligation to contribute;
 - No pupil will be treated differently according to whether a contribution is made.
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8. Remissions

Great Leighs Primary School is committed to ensuring that financial hardship does not prevent pupils from accessing educational opportunities.

The Headteacher has delegated authority from the Governing Body to consider requests for remission.

Remission may be considered for:

- Pupils eligible for Benefits-Related Free School Meals;
- Children Looked After (CLA);
- Previously Looked After Children;
- Families experiencing exceptional financial hardship;
- Other vulnerable pupils where participation would otherwise be prevented.

Support may include:

- Full remission;
- Partial remission;
- Payment plans;
- School subsidy from available funds.

All applications will be treated confidentially.

9. Residential Visits – Additional Remission Arrangements

Where funding allows, the school may provide financial support towards residential visits for pupils who:

- Receive Benefits-Related Free School Meals;
- Are Children Looked After;
- Have previously been looked after;
- Are experiencing significant financial hardship.

The level of support available will be determined annually according to available school resources and individual circumstances.

10. Refunds

School Meals

When payment has been made in advance and a pupil is absent, credits will normally remain on the parent's account for future meals.

Where a pupil leaves the school, parents may request a refund of any remaining balance.

Educational Visits

Where a pupil is unable to attend due to illness:

- Refunds will be made where costs can be recovered.
- Non-refundable costs already committed by the school may be retained.

If a visit is cancelled by the school, refunds will normally be made less any non-refundable deposits charged by providers.

Residential Visits

If a residential visit is cancelled:

- The school will seek to recover all possible funds from providers and insurers.
- Recovered funds will be refunded to parents.

Where a pupil withdraws after commitments have been made, parents may remain liable for irrecoverable costs.

Clubs and Activities

Refund arrangements for clubs, Breakfast Club and After-School Club are detailed within the relevant parental agreements.

11. Equality and Inclusion

The school will ensure that implementation of this policy complies with the Equality Act 2010.

No pupil will be disadvantaged, excluded or treated less favourably because of financial circumstances, disability, protected characteristics or family background.

The school will take reasonable steps to ensure that all pupils have access to educational opportunities regardless of their family's ability to pay.

11A. Statutory charging safeguards

No charge will be made for education provided during school hours, admission, education required as part of the National Curriculum, statutory religious education, or necessary materials and equipment, except where legislation expressly permits a charge. Charges for optional extras will not exceed the actual cost attributable to the participating pupil and will not subsidise pupils whose parents do not participate.

Where a residential activity takes place mainly during school hours, board and lodging charges will be remitted for parents receiving the benefits specified in current legislation and DfE guidance. Parents will be told how to apply confidentially. Voluntary contributions are genuinely voluntary and a child will not be treated differently because a parent cannot or does not contribute.

12. Monitoring and Review

The Governing Body will review this policy annually.

The Headteacher will monitor implementation and report any significant issues or trends to the Governing Body through established reporting procedures.

Approval

Approved by: Full Governing Body

Chair of Governors: Richard Thomas

Date: Autumn 26

Headteacher: James Garlick

Date: Autumn 26