

Churchfield C.E. Primary Academy



Charging and Remissions (including Debt Recovery) Policy 2024

Signed by:

G. Lloyd

Head of School

Date: 1st September 2024

K. Taylor

Chair of LAC

24th October 2024

Walking together in the light of the Lord, we aim to create a supportive and safe environment where we encourage each other to be the best we can be. At Churchfield we learn to take pride in our successes and aspire to make a positive difference for ourselves, the local community, and the wider world.

Introduction

All education during school hours is free. However, we make appropriate charges or request a voluntary contribution from parents/carers, which, we believe, enables the provision of a wide range of enriching activities. If a particular activity cannot take place without some help from parents/carers, this is explained to parents/carers. Crucially, no pupil will be left out of an activity because their parents/carers are unable to make a contribution.

There is no limit on the level of voluntary contribution, which parents/carers can make to academy activities nor is any restriction placed upon the use of such contribution. A request for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of an activity could, for example, include the cost of travel for accompanying adults. Also, parents/carers could be asked for a voluntary contribution towards part of the cost whilst the shortfall could be met from the proceeds of other fundraising. Parents/carers who have contributed voluntarily may be given a refund if their child is unable to take part in the trip through illness.

The Academy operates a Breakfast club daily before the start of school for the benefit of pupils and parents. The aim is to provide a nutritional breakfast to promote healthy eating and good attendance thereby improving pupil's learning and progress. A small charge is made to parents and this is to be reviewed annually. The Academy also offers an after-school club and again, a charge to parents is made for this provision.

The school occasionally offers additional activities after school. Qualified coaches/tutors, who are not members of the school staff, run and organise these sessions. A small charge for these sessions may be charged at cost. A small contribution may be asked for, for after-school activities run by school staff to cover incidental costs, such as cookery ingredients.

Principles

- We make no charge for National Curriculum or Statutory Religious Education and related activities in school time.
- We may ask for a voluntary contribution for activities wholly or partly in school time which otherwise would be prohibited by cost.
- There is no obligation to contribute
- No child will be excluded from any such activity on the basis on non-contribution.
- We may charge where it enables an increase or enriches non-statutory extra curricular provision at any time, for example residential visits.
- We may provide support towards part or all of the cost of an activity where there are financial difficulties and the parent/carer has met with the Head of School to discuss payment.
- Where this support is not agreed and contributions not made, places will not be offered/ will be withdrawn, where the academy cannot recoup costs – eg non-refundable deposits charged for residential visits.
- Contributions are voluntary. Pupils of parents/carers who are unable to contribute will not be discriminated against. However, where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make

the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then the activity will be cancelled.

Damage to school property

Parents/carers and community groups are asked to make a contribution towards replacing damaged or lost school property caused wilfully or negligently by their children or those whom they are responsible for. This included lost reading books (charged at £5).

No Debt Policy

The Academy has a 'no debt policy' for before and after-school clubs, paid-for nursery sessions and paid-for school meals. Therefore all sessions and meals should be paid for in advance.

Debt Recovery

Where there is an outstanding payment yet to be received and the acceptable credit period has been surpassed, an official invoice should be created outlining the value and reason for the debt, as well as the debtor's identity.

Upon creating the invoice and stipulating a date on which it must be paid by, there is acknowledgement from the school that the debt has been set up.

Verbal and written overdue payment reminders

Initial verbal reminder – informal in-person/telephone/email correspondence notifying person of debt (date and time should be officially recorded).

First formal written reminder – an official, dated letter addressed to the debtor should be written up two weeks after the first informal reminder and should acknowledge that it took place.

Second formal written reminder – this should come two weeks after the second reminder, citing the details of both previous reminders and stating that concerted efforts have been made to make the person aware that an outstanding debt is overdue.

Failure to respond

If these reminders are not responded to, another letter will be sent to the debtor advising them that the case has been to the school's legal advisors and Local Academy Committee. It is then for these parties to agree on a time-frame for a repayment or, if necessary, a payment plan for separate instalments. It is expected that the debt should be repaid as soon as possible, particularly after repeated reminders; however, this can be negotiated at the discretion of the Local Academy Committee.

If there is a case where the debtor is deemed to be refusing to pay without sufficient reason, the school may consider involving St. Chad's Academy Trust's legal services to resolve the issue and recuperate owed funds. In addition, it may be advisable to waive or partially waive debts where it is deemed that it does not make financial sense to continue allocating time and resources to pursuing. The Local Academy Committee will review any case a debt may be waived, and come to a final decision based on the value of costs versus value of the debt

Review Period

This policy will be reviewed by the senior leadership team and Local Academy Committee every two years. The next review is due in September 2026.