Eastlands Primary School

Charging and Remissions Policy

DATE	*REVIEW DATE*	*NOMINATED PERSON*	*NOMINATED GOVERNOR*
November 2026 Autumn Term 2	***November 2027 Autumn Term 2***	***Helen Devine***	
	(annual/biannual/ triennial)	***Website publication Yes***	***Committee FGB***

1.Purpose and Aims

Eastlands Primary School is committed to providing a broad, balanced and inclusive education. This policy explains when the school may make a charge, when education and activities must be provided free of charge, how voluntary contributions will be requested, and when charges will be reduced or remitted.

- To protect pupils' entitlement to free school education.
- To ensure that any charge is lawful, transparent, reasonable and no more than the permitted cost.
- To ensure that no pupil is disadvantaged because a parent or carer is unable or unwilling to make a voluntary contribution.
- To provide clear, confidential arrangements for statutory remission and additional hardship support.

2. Legal framework

This policy has regard to sections 449 to 462 of the Education Act 1996, the Department for Education's guidance Charging for school activities, the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty. For nursery provision, the school will also follow the current early education and childcare entitlement requirements and Warwickshire County Council's current provider agreement and guidance.
The school will review the legal references and eligibility criteria whenever this policy is updated. If legislation or statutory guidance changes before the next review date, the current legal requirement will take precedence over this policy.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body

- approves and keeps this policy under review;
- ensures charges and remissions comply with the law and are applied consistently;
- ensures suitable financial controls and oversight are in place;
- considers whether the policy supports equality, inclusion and access.

The headteacher

- implements the policy and ensures staff understand it;
- authorises charging arrangements and any discretionary remission or hardship support in line with delegated financial responsibilities;
- ensures parents and carers receive clear information before agreeing to a charge;
- reports material issues or proposed changes to governors.

Staff organising activities

- identify whether a payment is a lawful charge or a voluntary contribution;
- calculate costs accurately and avoid making a profit;
- provide clear written information to families;
- refer requests for remission or hardship assistance confidentially to the School Business Manager.

4. Education and activities provided free of charge

The school will not charge for education provided during school hours, including the supply of materials, books, instruments or other equipment required for that education, except where legislation expressly permits a charge.

- admission to the school;
- education provided during school hours;
- education outside school hours where it is part of the National Curriculum, a prescribed public examination syllabus for which the pupil is being prepared by the school, or statutory religious education;
- instrumental or vocal tuition where it is required as part of the National Curriculum or a prescribed examination syllabus, subject to the applicable music tuition regulations;
- entry to a prescribed public examination where the pupil has been prepared for it by the school and it forms part of the pupil's course;
- transport that the local authority or school is legally required to provide.

5. When charges may be made

The school will only charge where charging is permitted by law and is consistent with this policy. Parents and carers will be told the amount and basis of the charge before agreeing that their child may take part or receive the item or service.

Optional extras

An activity may be charged for as an optional extra where it is provided mainly or wholly outside school hours and is not part of the National Curriculum, a prescribed public examination syllabus or statutory religious education. Participation will be based on parental agreement.
The charge will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra. Where costs are shared, each participating pupil's charge will be a proportionate share of the total cost. The school will not make a profit. The calculation may include permitted costs such as materials, equipment, non-teaching staff, teaching staff engaged specifically for the activity where permitted, and appropriate travel costs.

Materials and finished products

Where a parent or carer wishes their child to own a finished product, the school may charge for the materials or ingredients used, provided this has been explained in advance. A pupil will still receive the education whether or not the parent agrees to purchase the finished product.

Music tuition

Charges may be made for individual or small-group instrumental or vocal tuition where permitted by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Education (Charges for Early Years Provision and Music Tuition) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended. No charge will be made where tuition must be provided free of charge.

Before-school, after-school and holiday provision

The school may charge for extended services, childcare, clubs or activities outside school hours where these are optional and charging is permitted. Charges will be communicated in advance and will not exceed the cost of provision, unless a separate lawful commercial arrangement applies.

6. Activities partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, the school will apply the statutory rules for deciding whether it is treated as taking place during school hours. For non-residential activities, travel time will be included when determining the proportion of the activity within school hours. For residential activities, the number of school sessions missed will be considered against the total number of half-days taken up by the visit. The school will seek advice where the position is unclear.

7. Educational visits and residential visits

No charge will be made for education provided on a visit where it must be provided free of charge. The school may request voluntary contributions towards the cost of a visit or activity. A lawful charge may be made for an optional extra or for board and lodging on a residential visit.

Board and lodging

The school may charge for the actual cost of board and lodging on a residential visit where charging is permitted. The charge will not exceed the actual cost.

Statutory remission

Where a residential activity is treated as taking place during school hours, or is required as part of the National Curriculum, a prescribed examination syllabus or statutory religious education, the school will remit the board and lodging charge for a pupil whose parent or carer meets the statutory eligibility criteria. Eligibility will be assessed against the benefits and criteria in force at the time. Requests and supporting information will be handled confidentially.
Where statutory remission does not apply, the school may consider additional discretionary assistance in cases of financial hardship, subject to available funds and the process in section 12.

8. Voluntary contributions

The school may ask parents and carers for voluntary contributions towards an activity that benefits the school or its pupils. The request will explain what the contribution will fund, the suggested amount, and whether the activity may be cancelled if insufficient funding is secured.
There is no obligation to contribute. A pupil will not be treated differently or excluded from an activity because their parent or carer is unable or unwilling to contribute. Staff will not pressure families to contribute and individual payment information will be kept confidential.
If voluntary contributions and other available funds are insufficient, the school may cancel or amend the activity. This possibility will be explained when contributions are requested. Any lawful compulsory charge for a residential visit or optional extra will be identified separately and will not be described as a voluntary contribution.

9. Public examinations

The school will not charge for a pupil's entry to a prescribed public examination where the pupil has been prepared for the examination by the school and it forms part of the pupil's course.
A charge may be made only where permitted by law, including an entry for an examination for which the pupil has not been prepared by the school, a re-sit, or where a pupil fails without good reason to meet an examination requirement and the governing conditions for charging are satisfied. The reason for, and

amount of, any charge will be explained in advance. These provisions are unlikely to arise routinely in a primary school but are included for completeness.

10. Nursery and funded early-years provision

The school will not charge parents or carers for hours delivered as part of a child's funded early-years entitlement. Access to a funded place will not be conditional on purchasing additional hours, meals, consumables, activities or other services.
Where permitted by current statutory guidance and the Warwickshire provider agreement, the school may offer separately chargeable additional hours or genuinely optional services, including meals, consumables or additional activities. Charges will be published clearly, itemised on invoices and explained before a place or service is accepted. Reasonable alternatives will be available where required so that families can access their funded entitlement free of charge.
A child who does not take up an optional extra will continue to receive provision that meets the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements. The school will ensure that its charging practice does not create an indirect barrier to funded provision.

11. Loss of or damage to property

The school may seek payment for the actual cost of repairing or replacing school property or equipment that has been lost or damaged, where this is lawful and reasonable. Payment will not be used as a penalty.
Before seeking payment, the school will discuss the matter with the parent or carer and consider the pupil's age, needs, the circumstances of the incident, whether the loss or damage was deliberate or avoidable, and the actual cost incurred. Any request may be reduced or waived where appropriate.

12. Remissions and hardship support

Parents and carers who may have difficulty meeting a permitted charge should contact the School Business Manager through the school office. Requests will be treated sensitively, confidentially and consistently.
The school will first consider whether the family has a statutory entitlement to full or partial remission. Where there is no statutory entitlement, the headteacher or an authorised delegate may approve discretionary support, taking account of the family's circumstances, the educational value and nature of the activity, equality and inclusion considerations, and the funds available.
The school will explain what evidence, if any, is reasonably required and who will make the decision. Sensitive financial information will only be shared with staff who need it for this purpose. A parent or carer may ask the headteacher to review a decision. Where the headteacher made the original decision, the review will be considered by the chair of governors or a nominated governor with no prior involvement.

13. Refunds and surpluses

If an activity is cancelled, the school will refund any charge paid, except where families were told in advance and agreed that specified non-recoverable costs may be retained. If a pupil does not attend, any refund will depend on whether the school can recover or avoid the relevant costs.
Where voluntary contributions have been collected and an activity is cancelled or costs are lower than expected, the school will explain how any surplus will be handled. A material surplus will be refunded or used for another stated purpose only with contributors' agreement. The school will not retain a surplus by default. Small administrative balances may be dealt with proportionately where the intended approach was made clear in advance.

14. Equality, accessibility and inclusion

In applying this policy, the school will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the public sector equality duty. The school will not discriminate unlawfully in the way it sets, communicates or applies charges and remissions. The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
The school will consider whether communications, payment arrangements or access to an activity create barriers for any pupil or family. Information will be provided in an accessible form where reasonably required, and reasonable adjustments will be made for disabled pupils and parents or carers. Charging decisions will take account of the school's duties towards pupils with SEND and other vulnerable groups.

15. Communication and publication

This policy will be published on the school website and made available on request. Information about a specific activity will clearly state whether payment is a charge or a voluntary contribution, what it covers, how it has been calculated, relevant cancellation and refund arrangements, and how families can seek remission or confidential support.

16. Complaints

Concerns should normally be raised first with the School Business Manager or headteacher so that the charging decision can be checked promptly. If the matter is not resolved, the school's complaints procedure may be used.

17. Monitoring and review

The governing body will review this policy annually, or earlier if legislation, statutory guidance, the Warwickshire provider agreement or school provision changes. The headteacher will monitor its operation and report any significant issue, complaint, recurring hardship concern or proposed change to governors.

Appendix 1: decision checklist for staff

- Is the provision education during school hours or otherwise required to be free? If yes, do not charge.
- If outside school hours, is it part of the National Curriculum, a prescribed examination syllabus or statutory religious education? If yes, do not charge for the education.
- Does the activity meet the legal definition of an optional extra, and has the parent agreed in advance?
- Is the amount limited to the permitted actual cost, shared proportionately, with no profit?
- Is the request actually a voluntary contribution? If so, state clearly that contribution is optional and no pupil will be disadvantaged.
- For a residential visit, have board and lodging and any voluntary contribution been identified separately, and has statutory remission eligibility been checked?
- For nursery provision, is the item genuinely optional and separate from access to funded hours, with any required free alternative available?
- Has the family been told how to request confidential remission or hardship support?
- Are equality, SEND, accessibility, cancellation and refund implications addressed?

Appendix 2: governor approval record

Approved by	Full Governing Body

Date approved	
Chair's signature	
Next review	November 2028
Minute reference	