

# Redfield Edge Primary School



## Charging and Remissions Policy

<b>Date reviewed</b>	March 2023	<b>Next review</b>	March 2024
<b>Policy type</b>	Non-statutory	<b>Review frequency</b>	Annually
<b>Responsibility</b>	Finance & Premises Committee		
<b>Signed</b> (Chair of F&P Committee)	<b>Name</b> (Chair of F&P Committee) Tom Sharp	<b>Signed</b> (Head Teacher) <i>L Robinson</i>	<b>Name</b> (Head Teacher) Lisa Robinson
<b>Ratified by FGB on</b>	<b>Signed</b> (Chair of Governors) <i>D Taylor</i>	<b>Name</b> (Chair of Governor) Dave Taylor	

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Part 1: EIA Screening

<b>Policies, Procedures or Practices</b>		<b>Date</b>	1.3.23
<b>EIA CARRIED OUT BY:</b>	C Walker	<b>EIA APPROVED BY:</b>	

Groups that may be affected:

Are there any concerns that the policy could have a different impact on any of the following groups? (please tick the relevant boxes)	Existing or potential adverse impact	Existing or potential for positive impact
Age (young people, the elderly: issues surrounding protection and welfare, recruitment, training, pay, promotion)		x
Disability (physical and mental disability, learning difficulties; issues surrounding access to buildings, curriculum and communication).		x
Gender Reassignment (transsexual)		x
Marriage and civil partnership		x
Pregnancy and maternity		x
Racial Groups (consider: language, culture, ethnicity including gypsy/traveller groups and asylum seekers)		x
Religion or belief (practices of worship, religious or cultural observance, including non-belief)		x
Gender (male, female)		x
Sexual orientation (gay, lesbian, bisexual; actual or perceived)		x

Any adverse impacts are explored in a Full Impact Assessment.

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## Introduction

Under the terms of the Education Reform Act 1996, the Governing Body may choose to charge for certain activities, and to request contributions for other activities. The Governors endorse the guiding principles contained within the act, in particular that no child should have his/her access to the curriculum limited by charges.

### 1. Principles

At Redfield Edge, we consider the inclusion of enrichment activities to be essential in supporting and enhancing this curriculum. Enrichment activities broaden children's learning experiences and help them to discover and develop personal interests and vital skills, such as problem solving, creative thinking and self-evaluation. Many of these activities are free (for example, all of the clubs that teachers offer; the activities provided by local secondary schools; and many of our Ignite Sports Partnership activities). However, some can only be made available to children through parental contributions that cover the costs of the specific activity.

### 2. *Guidance from 'Charging for school activities'*

School governing bodies and local authorities cannot charge for:

- an admission application to any state funded school - paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment);
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school

Schools and local authorities **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see below);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances;

- certain early years provision;
- community facilities.

### **3. Practice**

#### ***Guidance from ‘Charging for school activities’***

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as “optional extras”. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
  - a) part of the National Curriculum;
  - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school; or
  - c) part of religious education.
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school;
- transport that is not required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education; and
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- the cost of buildings and accommodation;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
- the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra.

### **4. Charges for Activities**

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It will not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge will not include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

## **5. Voluntary Contributions**

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Therefore, where charges may not be made, parents will be invited to make a contribution to cover the cost of school enrichment activities, whether taking place on the school premises or as part of an educational visit off site.

The Headteacher, on behalf of the governors, will carry out regular reviews to ensure voluntary contributions requested during the year for day trips and educational enrichment in school cover the cost of these events. Where voluntary contributions fall short of the additional cost of the trip or enrichment event, a review of the upper limit for annual voluntary contributions will be conducted and the outcome considered by the governors' finance committee. The school will aim to publicise any new amount in a school newsletter during term 1 each year. (The amount requested for residential trips is separate to this figure.)

The total value of voluntary contributions will not be planned to exceed the cost of the activity. Contributions will be requested at least one week ahead of the planned event to allow for contributions to be collected. Where a voluntary contribution is requested but insufficient contributions are made, the Headteacher will determine if the activity can proceed taking into account the fact that additional costs should not be made against the school's devolved budget.

In determining the above, the Governors have recognised that there are families for whom making a contribution would be difficult, and in such cases the school has a remissions process (see below).

## **6. Activities we charge for**

The School will charge for the following activities (in accordance with Section 2 & 3)

- Wrap around care: Breakfast club and Afterschool club
- Some afterschool clubs where a contribution for materials is needed e.g. Art club
- Residential Trips
- Friends events e.g. school disco, fun run

The School reserves the right to charge parents for:

- wilful damage to school property, or the misuse or loss of books and equipment
- use of school facilities e.g. telephone calls/private photocopying
- costs made against the school due to financial processes resulting from returned parental cheques
- costs associated for completing applications for passports (£5 charge for school fund)

### **7.1 Breakfast Club and Afterschool Club Charges**

Parents will be informed of the charges at least one week prior to the event.

Breakfast Club session 7.45-8.45am charge is £4

Afterschool Club session 3.30-5.30 charge is £5.50 from 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Both clubs are available for parents to book and pay for in advance on ParentMail and operate on an upfront payment for the session.

### **7.2 Management of wraparound care debts**

The ParentMail booking system allows for up to £10 debt per child before stopping any further bookings. Low balance prompts are texted and emailed to parents to ensure club bookings are paid for in advance. Where the debt threshold is reached the system will not allow further bookings to be made until the debt is cleared.

Automatic debt reminder texts are regularly sent out to parents. This system means that substantial debts are not accumulated for wraparound care.

Where a pupil has not had a booking made for a club but turns up, the school will

- charge the parent for Breakfast club retrospectively
- call the parent to confirm no other reason for pupil not being collected on time and charge retrospectively for afterschool club if a place is requested.

#### **Wraparound Care accounts in debt**

Where there is the £10 debt threshold is reached for this pupils' wraparound care the school office will undertake the following steps to manage the debt, including weekly reconciliation of club registers against the booking and payment system.

At each stage of escalation the following checks must be made:

Check 1: Is there a possibility that payments have not been credited to our school account?

Check 2: Has the person/parent made contact to discuss or disclose extenuating circumstances?

1. **Initial verbal reminder** – informal telephone call notifying the person of debt, the call will be followed up with an informal email via ParentMail from the School Office.
2. **First formal written reminder** – an official, dated letter addressed to the debtor is written up two weeks after the first informal reminder and acknowledges that it took place.
3. **Second formal written reminder** – this is sent 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.

If these reminders are not responded to, another letter is sent to the debtor advising them that the case has been referred to the school's legal advisors and governing board. These parties agree on a timeframe for a repayment or, if necessary, a payment plan for separate instalments.

Appendix 2 – Wraparound Care Debt Collection Letter templates

## 8. Remission of charges

The school will charge for specific items such as board and lodging in a residential trip. Under the school's policy there can be a remission of charges for families in receipt of the following (but not limited to) benefits (all subject to government or local authority review):

- 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)



In cases such as these, the school asks that parents inform the school on an activity by activity basis. Forms to request remission of charges are available from the office. See Appendix 1

Appendix 1

**REDFIELD EDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL  
REQUEST FOR REMISSION OF CHARGES FOR A RESIDENTIAL  
VISIT**

**Pupil Name:**

**Year/Class:**

**Visit Details:**

**Date of visit:**

**Entitlement details-**

**Free school meals:** Yes/No

**Other evidence:**

**Any other comments :**

**I confirm that the above details are correct**

Parent/Carer signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Office use only**

**CERTIFICATION**

Free meals review date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2 Wraparound Care debt collection letter templates

### Reminder letter

Address line one

Address line two

City/town

Postcode

Date

**Re: Reminder letter of payment for afterschool and breakfast clubs**

Dear name of parent,

According to our records, it appears that there is an outstanding payment for school wraparound care for your child as from today. The amount due for payment is **amount**. We would be grateful if you would kindly clear this outstanding balance straight away. The last payment shown on our system was made on **date**.

If the debt is not paid, the issue will be escalated to the governing board. Please pay by ParentMail, or, if you wish to pay by cheque, please make it payable to Redfield Edge Primary.

If you have any queries or difficulties with the payment of this amount, please let us know immediately and we will endeavour to help. Feel free to contact the school office on 01454 867165.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

## Final warning letter

Address line one

Address line two

City/town

Postcode

Date

**Re: Final warning letter for payment of afterschool and breakfast clubs**

Dear name of parent,

We have written to you previously regarding your child's outstanding wraparound care fees and, according to our records, we still have not received any payment. The last payment shown on our system was made on date.

The amount due for payment is amount and, as per our Charging and Remissions Policy, unless we receive payment by date, your child will not be able to attend wraparound care until the debt has been paid, via ParentMail or cheque or cash.

If the debt is not paid within this time, the issue will be escalated to the governing board.

If you have any queries or difficulties with the payment of this amount, please let us know and we will endeavour to help.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

## Outstanding debt payment plan letter

Address line one

Address line two

City/town

Postcode

Date

**RE: Outstanding debt payment plan**

Dear name of parent,

I am writing to you following our discussion with the governing board regarding your outstanding debts to the school. **[Outline here the details of the meeting you had with the parent and governing board to discuss the payment schedule. Note the date and time of the meeting, outline the conclusions that came from the meeting, and reflect the agreed payment schedule using the table – an example of phrasing can be seen below.]**

As discussed on date and time, you currently owe the school £ – a full breakdown of which can be found in the invoice issued to you on date, which is attached.

We appreciate that money pressures can be stressful and, as agreed in our previous communication with the governing board, we have outlined the agreed payment plan below.

### Payment plan

<b>Outstanding debt</b>	
<b>Schedule of payments</b>	
<b>Total number of payments agreed</b>	
<b>Instalment amount</b>	
<b>First payment date</b>	
<b>Second payment date</b>	
<b>Third payment date</b>	
<b>Fourth payment date</b>	
<b>Final payment date</b>	

Payment method	
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**[Outline below the next steps regarding debt recovery – an example of what should be included is outlined below.]**

Please note, any missed or late payments within this payment schedule will result in a final notice of payment. Once you have received the final notice, you will have **seven** days to pay the outstanding fee. If, after this time, no payment has been received, we will initiate formal legal proceedings.

If your financial situation changes and you are able to pay the remaining debts sooner than the schedule, you can contact the Headteacher to discuss whether payments will be accepted.

We understand that financial difficulties can place great strain on people. If you are currently experiencing financial difficulties and would like to speak to somebody for advice, you may find the following organisations helpful:

- Money Advice Service, available on 0800 138 7777 or at:  
<https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en>
- Citizens Advice, available on 0800 144 8848 or at:  
<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/contact-us/contact-us/>
- National Debtline, available on 0808 808 4000 or at:  
<https://www.nationaldebtline.org/contact-us/>

If you have any additional questions regarding your debt or payment plan with the school, you can contact the school office and we can discuss your options to avoid any issues with repayment.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation with the payment plan.

Yours sincerely,