

Charging, Remissions and Refunds Policy

TUDOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

Summer 2024

Review Summer 2026

Amended by: Clerk to the Governors & Office Manager

Tudor Primary School

Charging, Remissions and Refunds Policy

Rationale: to ensure that:

- charges for school activities are fair.
- there are clear procedures for refunds.
- there are clear procedures for remission of funds.

Introduction

The Governing Body wish to align this policy with the LAs charging policy as stated in the Financial Handbook for Schools Part 11.

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that additional activities can make towards a child's social and academic education.

The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for all children, and also as additional optional activities.

Charges

The Governing Body reserve the right to authorise a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school. The school is able to use additional funding it has received (eg PPG funding) to support families with charges.

- Activities outside school hours

The full cost for each child for activities deemed to be optional extras taking place largely outside normal school hours.

- Optional activities in school time

The full cost for optional activities outside the National Curriculum.

Charging in kind

The Governing Body may charge for ingredients and materials or require them to be provided, if parents have indicated that they wish to keep the finished product.

Damage

The Governing Body may charge for the cost of repair or replacement of items wilfully damaged, or loaned and subsequently damaged or lost.

Voluntary Contributions

For other trips and activities, which form part of the children's curriculum, a voluntary contribution may be requested.

Parents may therefore be asked to contribute voluntarily towards:

-museum and theatre trips

-visits by "experts" who are extending the children's knowledge and experience.

-group instrumental tuition

-sporting/ active opportunities

Outings, trips and visits may only be sustainable if parents provide voluntary contributions. It may therefore be necessary to cancel any such outing, trip or visit if insufficient funds are forthcoming.

In this respect we rely on the support and understanding of the parents, who we hope value these activities and understand that they are organised for the good of the children.

Calculating Charges for Activities

The charge per pupil is calculated by dividing the total cost of the activity by the number of children taking part, rounded up to the nearest pound.

Remission

The Education Act 1988 requires that charges be remitted in relation to the cost of individual musical tuition in the case of children whose parents are in receipt of income support or family credit.

In the case of genuine hardship (not necessarily PPG related) the school is able to provide assistance. Parents are made aware of this and asked to contact can be made with the Headteacher.

Refunds

If there is a surplus on a residential school journey, a refund to the nearest full pound below the actual refund will be paid if this is more than £5.

On day trips, and activities (such as swimming) a similar refund will be paid if the amount is more than £1.

Children who are unable to attend activities or trips through illness will be given all available refunds ie those which have not had to be paid or committed in advance.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body's responsibility to ensure that income is collected promptly and in full, that it is properly recorded and that it is banked intact is delegated to the headteacher (see Schedule of Delegation), and these tasks are carried out by the Office Manager.

Communication to Parents

The school aims to inform parents/ carers of residential school journeys at least 6 months in advance, to provide the maximum time for saving. For larger amounts owing, such as for residential trips, Arbor is set up to allow parents/carers to pay in instalments, of their choosing, up to the final due date. On the rare occasion that parents find they are still having difficulties after this date, a specific schedule of payments can be agreed with the office.

Reminders about the cost of school dinners are put in newsletters as well school comms. Dinners should be paid for in advance, for preference via the Arbor app; or cash in the office. Parents can pay specific amounts at a time of their choosing or top up with a lump sum. Accounts should not go into arrears.

Milk payments are due termly. Relevant parents are informed at the end of the preceding term for orders and payment ready for the next term. Payment is due by the half term.

Outstanding debts

The Office Team send out reminders to all parents with outstanding debts, weekly (usually on a Thursday) to request that accounts are topped up. If the debt remains outstanding or increases, a specific target email will be sent with instructions and solutions to clear the debt, including, providing a packed lunch until the debt is clear again. If debts remain outstanding, the office, or SLT if

required, will make a phone call to the parent/carer to discuss the situation and work out a payment plan and provide information regarding any social services that could help with financial difficulties.

Governors' Monitoring of bad debts

The Governing Body has the Authority to write off debts up to a value of £500. It delegates authority to the headteacher to write off debts up to the value of £50. Items over £500 must be referred to the Chief Financial Officer for approval.

Where the Governing Body write off debts this shall be formally recorded, and the record kept for seven years.

Legal Action

Legal action may only be initiated by the County Secretary, who will inform school of the correct form of action. Parents will be informed of this step, when appropriate.

Dinner Money – Bad Debts

HCL invoice monthly for school dinner charges. If the school can not collect outstanding dinner money from the parents it means the debt will have been covered from the school budget. In this case, SLT or the Governing board will make the decision as to whether the budget can cover this and the debt be written off, or whether the school wishes to initiate any legal proceedings against the parents/carers.

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Review date: Summer 2026