| Berkswich CE Primary School | | | |
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| **Reference Number**<br><br>S2 | **Shared with Staff**<br><br>September 2026 | **Ratified by Governing Board**<br><br>October 2026 | **Review Date**<br><br>September 2027 |
| Policy Title | **Charging and Remissions Policy** | | |

This policy operates within the Christian ethos of the school and has been written to reflect an understanding of the importance of proper stewardship of the God-given resources and facilities we have been gifted with and are responsible for. This is while seeking to follow the example of Jubilee and forgiveness God has made to us by ensuring fair access for all in our school, regardless of levels of income.

**Purpose of the Policy**

Berkswich CE Primary is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all children to benefit from school activities and visits, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras. This policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered, whilst at the same time, trying to minimise the financial barriers that may prevent some children from taking full advantage of the opportunities.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE. Please note that while this policy may be more or less generous than the LA's, we have ensured it meets the requirements of the law.

**Legal framework**

This policy will have consideration for, and be compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010

- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) Charging for school activities
- Maintained schools governance guide (July 2026)
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- DfE Free school meals: guidance for local authorities, maintained schools, academies and free schools

Berkswich CE Primary School is a local authority-maintained school and therefore follows the processes for debt recovery in line with Staffordshire County Council's Debt Recovery Policy. Please **click** to view a copy.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies and procedures:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- The school's Scheme of Delegation
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Pupil Premium Policy
- School Visit Policy
- Cedar's Fees, Payment and Bookings Policy
- Nursery Payment Policy
- School Uniform Policy

**Charging for education**

We will not charge parents for:

- Admission applications.
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, or equipment).
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of RE.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, unless provided at the request of the pupil's parents.

We may charge parents for the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where they desire their child to own them
- Optional extras
- Music tuition (in certain circumstances)
- Vocational tuition (in certain circumstances)
- Certain early years provision
- The use of community facilities and other commercial activities.
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information.

**Optional extras**

We may ask for a voluntary contribution for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
  - Part of the national curriculum
  - RE
- Books or equipment which a child would like to keep at the end of the year, such as music books
- To support visits which involve an outside group of specialists who come into school to provide a better offer than that supplied through an external visit off-site
- Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the LA has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils

When calculating the cost of optional extras, the school will only take into account the cost, or an appropriate proportion of the cost, of the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- Buildings and accommodation
- Employment of non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff (including TAs) under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra

The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils.

Parents who pay for an activity will not be charged more than the cost of their own child's place in order to subsidise pupils whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

If a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the school will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

The school will not charge for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Therefore, parental agreement is a prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra.

If a charge is to be made for a particular activity, such as optional extras, parents will be informed of how the charge will be calculated.

**Responsibilities**

The governing board of Berkswich CE Primary School is responsible for determining the content of the policy and the headteacher for implementation. The responsibility for determining the level of voluntary contribution is delegated to the headteacher.

**Voluntary contributions**

The school may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the school will make this clear to parents at the outset. The school will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents to make a contribution, and notify parents whether assistance is available.

No pupil will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity and the school will set out how places will be allocated from the outset. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled and this will be made clear to parents.

The school will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions. Measures to request contributions that could make parents feel pressured are not used: SchoolComms is used for parents pay voluntary contributions privately.

The following is a list of additional activities organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. These activities are known as enrichment activities /optional extras. This list is not exhaustive:

- visits to museums;
- sporting activities which require transport expenses;
- on-line subscriptions for websites and activities accessed out of school hours
- outdoor adventure activities;
- visits to the theatre;
- school trips abroad;
- musical events;
- expert coaching or training.

**Admission**

There is no charge for admissions into Berkswich CE Primary.

**Music tuition**

Music tuition is the only exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parents.

The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition and instrument purchase or hire as necessary. No charge will be made if the teaching is part of the national curriculum or of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination. No charge will be made in respect of pupils who are LAC.

Berkswich CE places great emphasis on music tuition in school and, therefore, provides each child entering Year Three a recorder (which is then used in Year Four, Year Five and Year Six). Parents may purchase recorder music books as these are often retained by the children at the end of the period of tuition, for home use.

The cost of sessions are set by dividing the cost of the year's lessons by the number of children who have signed up for a place. Berkswich CE is unable to refund the fees paid if a child no longer wishes to attend, unless the place can be filled by another child; in this case, parents and carers will be refunded for the sessions taken up by the additional child.

**Transport**

The school will not charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport.
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated.

**Residential visits**

The school will not charge for supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits. The school will charge for board and lodging, but the charge will not exceed the actual cost. School will ensure that any possible exemptions to payments required by external providers of residential visits are communicated to parents.

The school will provide a form for parents to submit and provide proof of receipt of one of the below benefit payments, in order to be considered for a reduction in the cost of a residential visit.

**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
- Universal Credit (from September 2026 there is no earnings limit)

**Damaged or lost items**

The school may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents/carers. Parents/carers will only be charged the replacement cost to purchase the same or equivalent item. The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances (e.g., financial hardship).

**Remissions**

Subsidies for those experiencing hardship or in receipt of funding, such as Pupil Premium, is limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis and if the full cost of the trip or activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or activity will be cancelled. Please note that not all pupils who are eligible for free school meals attract pupil premium funding.

In the case of a request made on the basis of hardship, the school may ask for evidence related to the following benefits:

- 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 State Pension Credit
- Universal Credit (from September 2026 there is no earnings limit)

To request assistance, parents should contact school via the office.

**School trip refunds**

All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded with the condition that this money has been refunded by the organisation running the activity or planned visit/residential.

In the event that a school trip is cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher will consult the governing board on the matter, taking into account the cost to the school, including alternative provision cost.

In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The headteacher will discuss options with the governing board, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The headteacher will discuss options with the governing board, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The headteacher will consult the governing board on the matter, taking into account the reason for cancellation,

whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The headteacher will consult the governing board on the matter, taking into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1 per pupil. If the excess is less than £1 per pupil, this will be paid into the school's account.

Excess expenditure will be subsidised by the school fund.

The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

**School meals**

From September 2026, free school meals come in two types: targeted and expanded. Targeted free school meals go to the families who qualified under the old rules, including Universal Credit households earning below £7,400 a year; they also bring the school pupil premium funding and other potential help such as reduced costs for trips. Expanded free school meals go to every other family on Universal Credit, whatever they earn, but they cover a free school meal only, with no pupil premium or other financial help attached.

Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount determined by Mellors Catering (the external provider of school meals at Berkswich CE). Please see wrap-around charges for Nursery meals; for parents who do not wish to pay for a school meal in addition to the costs of the wrap-around lunch club, a packed lunch from home may be provided.

**Swimming**

The school organises swimming lessons for certain year groups. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We inform parents and carers when these lessons take place, and we seek written permission of parents or carers for their children to take part. There is no charge for this activity to the parent or carer.

**Sports Coaching out of school hours**

The school may offer additional sports coaching after school. A qualified coach, who is not a member of staff, runs and organises these sessions. A small charge is made for these sessions, the total of which does not exceed the cost of the tuition. Additional free sports clubs may be available.

**Other extracurricular clubs**

A small charge is payable by parents and carers who wish their child to participate in particular after-school clubs where consumables are required. This money goes directly into school fund in order to purchase items for school.

**Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme**

The school's Freedom of Information Policy and Freedom of Information Publication Scheme sets out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.