



# Carfield Primary School

## Charging and Remissions Policy 2025-26

Date Reviewed	Reviewed by	Approved by (Governor Committee)	Next Review
July 2022	Jacqui Steel		September 2023
September 2023	Hannan Mohammed	Finance and Resources	September 2024
March 2025	Hannan Mohammed	Finance and Resources	March 2026

## Introduction

Carfield Primary School is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, 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.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE. We promise:

Not to charge for education provided during school hours.

To inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions.

## Legal Frame work

This policy will have consideration for, and be in compliance 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'
- DfE (2020) 'Governors' Handbook'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Policy
- Governance Framework

## Charging for Education

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum with the exception of individual or group music tuition.

We will not charge parents for:

- Admission applications.
- 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, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the school, or part of religious education.
- 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
  - Music and vocational tuition (in certain circumstances)

## Optional extras

We may charge parents for the following optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
- Part of the national curriculum.
- Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school.

- Religious education.
- Transport, other than that arranged by the LA for the pupil to be provided with education
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils eg breakfast club or out of school provision

When calculating the cost of optional extras, Carfield Primary School will only take into account the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- The employment of non-teaching staff
- The cost of teaching staff (including teaching assistants) 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.

Carfield will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils. We will not charge a subsidy for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. If a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, we will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating. 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 pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra.

### **Voluntary contributions**

When organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the trip. All contributions are voluntary. If we do not receive 85% sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a trip. If a trip goes ahead, it should include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. Sometimes the school pays additional costs in order to support the visit whether from pupil premium funding (30% deduction for pupil premium children) or school fundraising. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded. The school provides this information on request.

The following is a list of additional activities organised by the school, which require voluntary contributions from parents. This list is not exhaustive:

visits to museums, places of interest;  
 sporting activities;  
 outdoor adventure activities;  
 visits to the theatre;  
 residential school trips;  
 other arts events.

### **Residential visits**

If the school organises a residential visit in school time or mainly school time, which is to provide education directly related to the National Curriculum, we charge for the education and travel expenses in addition to a charge to cover the costs of board and lodging. The school holds a Pupil Premium budget that will be used to subsidise the cost of trips for pupils receiving FSM (30% deduction).

## **Music tuition**

All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this.

There is a charge for individual or group music tuition if this is not part of the National Curriculum. The peripatetic music teachers teach individual or small group lessons. We make a charge for these lessons. We give parents information about additional music tuition at the start of each academic year.

## **Swimming**

The school organises swimming lessons for all children in Key Stage 2. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. We make no charge for this activity. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place, and we ask parents for their written permission for their child to take part in swimming lessons.

## **Sports**

The school offers additional sports coaching at lunchtime and after school. On the occasions when a qualified coach, who is not a member of the school staff, runs and organises these sessions, we may make a small charge for these sessions. If the sessions are delivered by a member of the school staff, no charge is made.

## **Transport**

The cost of transport may be subsidised through school fund, or itemised as part of the overall cost of school trips. If charges are required to cover the expenses of the trip we do not, under any circumstances, make a profit.

## **Nursery**

The cost of additional nursery hours:

- £34 per day.
- £15 for morning/afternoon session
- £4 for lunch supervision.

Parents will be charged by invoice for each half term (for those with chargeable additional hours). Failure in payment will result in a loss of the nursery place.

For those children staying full days and choosing to stay at school during lunchtime, you will be charged for the extra hour at lunchtime at the cost of £4 per hour

All payments to school are made through the Arbor payment system.

## **School Meal Debt (appendix 1)**

## **Appendix 1:**

### **Carfield Primary School Policies School Meals Debt Recovery**

**Policy Date Created: January 2024**

**Updated: September 2025**

**Created by: Headteacher, Business Manager**

**Date to be Reviewed: September 2026**

The Carfield Primary School Debt Recovery Policy has been adopted to ensure that there is a consistent and fair approach to debt incurred by parents/carers.

As the Local Authority is no longer accountable for the administration of dinner money debt the responsibility now falls on the school to pursue instances of non-payment. As a result, and unfortunately, the school budget has to directly fund any outstanding debts that cannot be recovered, thereby directly affecting the amount of money that is available to provide education to all pupils.

The Governors agree that a system that works best is a 'zero tolerance' approach. The Schools Meals Service is no different to any other business in that meals have to be paid for. It is very time consuming for school to continuously chase parents for money. It can have a negative effect on relationships with families.

The free school meal system is there for parents who cannot afford school meals. Currently pupils in Foundation, Year 1 and Year 2 are able to have Universal Infant Free School Meals. Parents of pupils in Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 will have to pay for any school meals that their child has unless they are eligible and apply for Income Based Free School Meals. Parents who meet certain criteria may qualify for Income Based Free School Meals. Income Based Free School Meals are a statutory right and it is important that all parents/carers who qualify take up their child's entitlement so that they can receive a school meal each day. Information on the entitlement to free school meals and an application form can be found on the Sheffield City Council website: <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/schools-childcare/school-meals> If a child's entitlement to free school meals expires or the parents/carers personal circumstances change the parent/carer must provide a packed lunch or send payment in advance for a school dinner.

Payment for School Meals, where possible, should be made in advance. Payment can be made using our online payment system on the Arbor app. When parents/carers log onto Arbor app they can easily see the balance of their account.

The school office no longer accepts payments by cash or cheque.

#### **Management of School Meal Debts**

If a child takes a school meal which has not been paid for, an email will be sent to the parent/carer requesting immediate payment. If immediate action is not taken and the debt exceeds the equivalent of 5 meals, one week, parents will be asked to provide a packed lunch for their child until the debt is completely cleared and our Safeguarding Team may be informed. The parents/carers will receive a formal letter explaining that the school is not obliged to provide a school dinner where payment is not forthcoming or where authorisation for free school dinners has not been received.

Where a child takes unpaid meals, the school may try to establish if the child is entitled to free school meals, or if the parent/carer is experiencing hardship which affects their ability to pay. Under these circumstances the parent/carer should be invited to apply for Income Based Free School Meals and can speak confidentially to the Head Teacher, Learning Mentor or School Business Manager.

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### Carfield's Objectives:

- Minimise opportunities for unpaid school meal debts.
- Avoid costly legal referrals for unpaid debts.
- Ensure no child goes without a lunch, even when meal debt is outstanding.

### Key Points:

#### 1. Provision of Lunch:

- Children with a meal debt of **£14.15 or more** will receive a *school sandwich meal* until debts are cleared.
- The school ensures every child has lunch, irrespective of unpaid meal debts.

#### 2. Legal Measures:

- The school may initiate legal proceedings for recovery of unpaid debts.
- The school can alert the **Local Authority (LA)** if a child isn't provided a suitable lunchtime meal.
- Any *debt write-offs* must receive approval from the **Governing Body/Finance Committee**, with the Head Teacher providing reasons for discontinuing recovery.

### Debt Recovery Process for Amounts £15 and Above:

#### 1. Initial Notice:

- A letter informs parents of the debt and gives a payment deadline.

#### 2. Second Reminder:

- A follow-up letter restates the debt amount and payment timeline.

#### 3. Parent-Business Manager Meeting:

- Parents are invited to meet the Business Manager to discuss:
  - The debt
  - Their financial circumstances
  - Payment plan options

#### 4. Headteacher Meeting:

- If unresolved, parents meet with the Headteacher to:
  - Discuss debt and financial situation.
  - Finalise payment options.
  - Be informed of potential legal actions.

## **5. Legal Proceedings:**

- If all efforts fail, the school contacts the Local Authority legal team to begin formal debt recovery actions.

This policy ensures fairness while maintaining fiscal responsibility.