



Charging and Remissions Policy

Statutory policy

The Governors of Ravenswood Special School recognise that under Education Reform Act 1996 the policy for charging for school activities is as follows:

1. Education for all registered children during school hours is free of charge including the provision of books and equipment needed for courses of study;
2. Education during school hours is defined as that where more than 50% of the time of the activity, including associated travelling time takes place within school session times;
3. No compulsory charges may be made for education and associated incidentals provided outside school hours where education is:
 - Required as part of the syllabus for prescribed public examinations
 - Provided specifically to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum; or
 - Provided specifically to fulfil the statutory duties relating to Religious Education.
4. Charges can be made for educational activities as optional extras beyond the requirements given in Sections 1 and 2 above.
5. Voluntary contributions can be sought for the benefit of the pupils' education or for any school activities.
6. Charges are made for School Meals – rates being determined by the Business Committee and aligned with local schools. Where monies are not collected and Free-School Meals are not assigned, the school will seek advice from the LEA.

Non-Payment of Money

It is our expectation that parents pay dinner money on a weekly or termly basis. Action to be taken where payment is not made at least fortnightly:

- a) First Reminder Letter sent
- b) Second Reminder Letter sent a week after the initial reminder. This will also suggest the family may prefer to send in a packed lunch for their child.
- c) The school will also notify the Social Worker (if known) and/or Educational Welfare Officer.
- d) Arrange for parents to meet with governors and agree a repayment plan.
- e) If no payment has been received a month after letters are sent, advice from the LA Legal Services Department will be sought. If at any time it is decided not to pursue the debt, the school will record in writing that the sum owed has been written off. This should be authorised by Business Committee.

At no time will a child at Ravenswood School be denied a school dinner.

Discretionary policy

The school charges for some activities and requests voluntary contributions for others as indicated in the table below:

Activity	Charge or request for donation	Subsidies	No charge
School Dinners	Charge		For EY and KS1 children and for children eligible for FSM
Individual music tuition	Charge		
Educational visits	Request for voluntary contribution	Half price for children eligible for FSM	
Residential activities (travel, board & lodging and entrance fees)	Charge	Half price for children eligible for FSM	
Healthy squash and snacks for mid-morning	Suggested contribution £5 per short term.		

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Activity	Charge or request for donation	Subsidies	No charge
Ingredients and / or material for practical subjects where the item is kept or eaten by the child	Suggested contribution £5 per short term.		
After school clubs	Charge of £4 (1 hour session)- £6 (1½ hour session) per session (based on a charge of £4 per hour)	Subsidised by the Parents and Friends Association	
Statutory risk assessment for work experience placements	Voluntary contribution £35		
Replacement of books or equipment	Charge cost of books/equipment.		
Costs incurred as a result of deliberate damage to school buildings, property or furniture	Charge 25% of costs	Remaining cost of repair/replacement is covered by school	
Replacement of lost ID/access badge by staff, governor or visitor to school.	Charge of £10 for replacement		

Note: The Governors will leave to the Headteacher to decide the proportion of costs of an activity, which should be charged to public (LA Funds) or non-public (School) funds. The actual charges will be notified to parents on a regular basis.

Voluntary contributions policy

- The school, through the staff organising any activities, seeks voluntary contributions for its benefit or for the effective provision of activities, including:
 - materials for practical subjects e.g. DT and cooking.
 - “healthy” squash and snacks for children at mid-morning. These are used to aid the development of good social communication skills.
 - educational visits which enhance the curriculum and their child’s learning. All trips are costed separately; both the travel and entrance costs and voluntary contributions are based on these costs.
 - to cover the charges for the statutory risk assessments for all work experience placements; £35 in 2023-2024.
- All communications with parents relating to activities requesting contributions to the total cost must make it clear that such contributions are genuinely voluntary. Provision may be made for financial support for case where circumstances prevent a contribution. However, if the voluntary contributions are not sufficient to meet the costs of the activity, the activity may be cancelled.
- If the visit / activity makes a surplus of more than 5%, the School will offer a refund to those parents who have made a voluntary contribution. Any surpluses less than 5% will be used to cover the administration costs of the activity
- The Governors of Ravenswood School recognise and welcome the fund raising and sponsorship activities organised by the Friends of Ravenswood School and other bodies. Their generosity means that pupils and their families benefit from reduced charges for many events.

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Income from Other Organisations

The School does receive income from other organisations e.g. Lettings, Traded Services.

Managing Debts

The school requests all payments to be made in a timely manner and will keep people informed of any mounting debts. They will also offer a payment plan if someone is having difficulty settling their payments.

Action to be taken to remind debtors that their debt remains outstanding once the normal settlement period has passed:

- a) A normal settlement period of two weeks is given for the payment of monies.
- b) First Reminder Letter – 2 weeks after the normal settlement period. This letter, should further action on debt recovery be necessary, proves that these attempts have been made in a timely manner i.e. at the time the debt arose.
- c) Second Reminder Letter – a week after the initial reminder.
- d) We recognise that should action to recover a debt need to be taken further, formal, written evidence may need to be produced. Therefore, two further formal warnings would be issued. Details of all reminders, whether verbal or in writing, will be maintained on file.
- e) Failure to Respond to Reminders – If no response is received from the reminders issued, the Headteacher will refer the matter to the Business Committee. Two options are then available for debts up to £500.
 - (i) to refer the issue to the LA Legal Services Department
 - (ii) to write off the bad debt

Where the Business Committee writes off debts this shall be formally recorded and the record retained for seven years.

Exceptions policy

Children who are on “Free School Meals” will be asked to make voluntary contributions of 50% of trips. There are no further exceptions to the above policy.

History of document

Previous versions now deleted from system. New issue:

Issue	Author/Owner	Date Reviewed	Approved by Governors on	Comments
1.	Business Committee	05/12/12	05/12/12	Minor changes.
2	Business Committee	Autumn 2013	3/10/13	No change
3	Business Committee	Autumn 2014	2/10/14	Minor changes
4	Business Committee	Autumn 2015	30/09/15	Minor changes
5	Business Committee	Autumn 2016	21/9/16	Minor amends and inclusion of table
6	Business Committee	Autumn 2017	25/9/17	Increase of charge for deliberate damage to property to 25%
7	FGB	Autumn 2018	5/9/18	Provide clearer information on voluntary contributions and request contributions for WEX risk assessments.

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8	Business Committee	Autumn 2018	3/10/18	Clarification on charge for after school clubs and voluntary contributions for WEX
9	Business Committee	Autumn 2019	2/10/19	Updated Reform Act Date. Minor changes
10.	Business Committee	Autumn 2020	30/09/2020	
11.	Business Committee	Autumn 2021	26/01/2021	
12.	Business Committee	Autumn 2022	28/09/2022	Removed 'home-school diaries' from costs to replace.
13.	Business Committee	Autumn 2023		