


Brookland Federation

'Brookland Infant & Nursery School'



Charging and Remissions Policy

April 2025

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| Last reviewed: | September 2024 |
| Written by: SLT |  |
| Approved by: Governors | |
| Next review due by: | September 2025 |

CHARGES POLICY

The Local Authority or Governing Body may not charge for anything unless they have drawn up a statement or general policy on charging. The Governing Body's policy may be more or less generous than the Local Authority's, as long as it meets the requirements of the law.

In general, no charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools (this does not include the nursery class). Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it must be free. However, the school may charge for activities outside of school hours where these are not a necessary part of the national curriculum.

Residential Trips

Where the trip takes place wholly, or mainly, during school hours, children whose parents are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of the charge for board and lodging:

- 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)

Voluntary Contributions

The Headteacher or Governing Body may ask parents for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours;
- school equipment;
- school funds generally.

The contribution must be genuinely voluntary and the pupils of parents who are unable or unwilling to contribute will not be discriminated against. Where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then it will be cancelled.

No pupil may be left out of an activity because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. The letter sent to parents in this case will include the following wording:-

'In accordance with legislation we can only ask for a contribution towards the cost of the (activity). We estimate that the cost will be £ per child. If insufficient money is received from your contributions then the visit may have to be cancelled.'

The Headteacher / Business Manager is responsible for determining the amount of voluntary contribution required to make the activity viable.

Refunds

Where an activity makes an unexpected surplus the school will consider making a refund. In accordance with the guidance set out within Hertfordshire County Council's Financial Handbook for Schools the school will make a refund where the surplus is either:

- 5% or more of the total cost per person, or
- £2 or more per person

Surpluses will be reimbursed in 'round amounts' only, eg £3 not £3.29.

Where a refund is offered, the accompanying letter will indicate that 'a surplus of £x has been made and that if the parent / guardian would like to take advantage of it they should contact the office by 'date'. If the school is not contacted by the date it will be assumed that the refund has been donated to school funds. All refunds will be made in a format in that allows a clear audit trail.

OTHER CHARGES**School Meals**

School meals are currently free for infant children due to the Universal Infant Free School Meals Grant.

The school now uses SchoolGrid that enables parents to order their child's meals up to 10 weeks in advance. Parents are advised that they must cancel their child's meal if their child is absent. If parents do not cancel the meal then the school has to bear this cost. Parents are now warned that if they do not cancel their child's meal they will be charged at the current meal rate (£2.58) as the school is charged for this meal. This charge is collected via Arbor parent portal.

School Milk

School milk will be provided and will be charged for at the current rate as specified by Hertfordshire County Council. Parents whose children are entitled to benefit related Free School Meals will also be entitled to free milk for their children.

Damage to school property and breakages

In the unlikely event of the wilful or reckless damage to school property by a pupil or parent/carer, the school may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost towards the replacement or repair of the item. Lost or damaged library books will result in a charge to cover the cost of a replacement.

Nursery

All children are entitled to receive the statutory core 15 hours free early education (FEE).

Instances where parents would be charged:

1. We may decide to ask for a deposit to secure a nursery place with this being non-refundable if the child leaves before the October half term after their start in September. This deposit could be paid by cash or cheque and would be held in the safe until October half term when it would be refunded to parents of children still at our nursery. Parents on certain benefits would not be expected to pay the deposit.
2. We offer some additional 15 hour free childcare places to provide 30 hour provision. Priority for these places is given to parents who meet the Government's eligibility criteria for 30 hours free childcare and **have a valid voucher code at the time of admission**. Parents and carers will be expected to demonstrate their eligibility termly, using the Government website Childcare Choices www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure that any voucher codes for 30 hours funding are renewed when required by HMRC as otherwise these vouchers expire. Parents must follow any instructions in HMRC confirmation email as failure to follow these instructions will result in the vouchers expiring. This will then result in the school being unable to claim funding. In this instance any additional hours above the 15 hours statutory core free entitlement will have to be paid for. These hours would be charged at the current hourly rate of £6.00 per hour.

3. Our 30 hour offer is made up as shown below:

8.45am to 3.30pm Monday to Thursday
8.45am to 11.45am Fridays

Parents have the option of paying for extra hours on Fridays if they wish their child to stay until 3.30pm on that afternoon. The extra hours in options 2. And 3. will be charged at the rate of £6.00 per hour. This rate has been determined by the school and will be reviewed annually in the Summer Term.

Parents will be invoiced at the start of each half term in respect of both the above options. Payment in advance is preferred but payment options will be negotiated with parents in certain circumstances and especially if they are paying for the extra 15 hours a week. Payment by BACS is preferred.

Failure to pay fees may result in the withdrawal of their child's place.

Lettings

The Governing Body has a 'Lettings' Policy which is regularly reviewed. The hire charges are determined on an individual basis when drawing up the hiring agreement.

Extended Schools Activities

After-School activities arranged directly by the school with an outside provider will be charged as agreed with the provider. Parents will either pay the provider directly or payments will be collected by the school and the provider will invoice the school for the activity. Some of these activities may be offered free of charge to parents with the cost being covered by a grant.

Pre-School

In line with the contract between Hertfordshire County Council and Brookland Infant and Nursery School, the school will provide accommodation on the site for a pre-school.

At present the Lulu's Pre-School runs a pre-school in the 'old nursery' building and therefore has a formal lease with Hertfordshire County Council which the school manages on behalf of the County Council. A charge for services will be made as detailed in the lease and a yearly rent (set by Hertfordshire County Council) will be collected by Hertfordshire County Council. Hertfordshire County Council will pay 90% of the rent collected to the school. The Pre-School will also be charged appropriately for any use of photocopying equipment and supplies and any use of the building outside of the times specified in the lease.

Documents provided under the Freedom of Information Act

Single copies of information will be provided free unless stated otherwise in Section 6 of the Publication Scheme document. A charge may be made where the request involves a lot of photocopying or printing, a large postage charge or is for a priced item such as some printed publications or videos (the charge will be determined at the time of the request).