



## CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY – BIRCHWOOD NURSERY SCHOOL

### PURPOSE

At **Birchwood Nursery School** we recognise the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities can make towards the children's personal and social development. E.g. cooking, short walking trips to the park or shops and special visitors. We aim to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the children.

We believe that all children should have equal opportunity to benefit from the provision, services, activities, training and visits provided by the Nursery irrespective of their, or their parent's financial means. This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some children at the Nursery benefitting from all the services and experiences we provide.

Any charges made by the school must meet the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1996. We endorse the guiding principles contained in the Act, in particular that no child from disadvantaged families should have his/her access to the curriculum limited and that no child will be prevented from taking part because of financial barriers.

### Child Care Charges

Charges for child care will be reviewed regularly (at least annually) by the Governing Body. Fees reflect the cost required to provide high quality, safe and stimulating care for each child which is sustainable.

- A registration fee of £20 is charged for all non-funded children, this fee is non-refundable. This charge is in addition to fees and goes towards administration costs.
- The first payment will be for one month's fees in advance and are due on the first working day of each month. Payments are accepted through parent/carer workplace voucher schemes or [www.schoolgateway.com](http://www.schoolgateway.com)
- When paying by an employer childcare voucher scheme, payment of fees must be set up to be received by the first working day of each month.
- If fees are not paid by the first of each month in advance of care being, a reminder letter will be issued and retained on file.
- If fees remain unpaid after 5 calendar days, the Childcare Manager will issue a final reminder invoice to the parent requesting payment is made within 24 hours. A late payment charge of £20 will also be added to the outstanding invoice.
- The Preschool Manager has the right to suspend the childcare place if payment is not made at the beginning of each month.

- A timeline for collecting late fees is in place and is strictly adhered to. Where fees are paid persistently late or not at all and no explanation given, we will be forced to terminate the child's place with immediate effect. \*there may be rare exceptions at the discretion of the Preschool Manager in consultation with the Headteacher
- If parents wish to purchase additional sessions (over and above the government funded hours per week that a child is entitled to) parents/carers must complete a booking form giving 24 hours in advance and include full payment. This also applies if you wish to book a lunchtime session. Payment for all sessions must be made prior to the session.
- One month's written notice is required from parents/carers if a child is leaving the Nursery or requires an alteration to existing requirements.
- Staff using the preschool facility at Birchwood Nursery School are entitled to a 35% reduction in fees. This does not include school lunch fees charged by Hertfordshire Catering.
- Payment of childcare fees will be for 50 weeks per year, this excludes Bank Holidays. In the event of absence due to sickness or holidays charges will still be made.
- If the childcare is closed for exceptional circumstances e.g. snow, no heating, staff illness, the monies paid for these sessions will be reimbursed.
- In cases of loss, damage or breakages of school books or activity packs on loan to parents the school may make a charge to cover the cost of replacements.
- Parents will be asked for a donation of £1 per week towards the cost of providing a snack for the pupils but under no circumstances will a child will be refused a snack due to non-payment.

### **Dinner Money Charges**

Meal charge forecast invoices are sent before the start of each month and are payable in full by the *first day of every month*. Payment is monitored carefully and in the event of invoices remaining unpaid for more than 5 days after the start of each month, parents will be informed that no further meals will be provided until the debt has been paid in full. If for any reason this causes you any issues please speak to the Nursery School Administrator in the first instance. If your child is absent for any reason you must inform the school office no later than 9:30am. This will ensure that you are not charged for meals not taken.

Should the school need to send a payment reminder, the school reserves the right to add an administration fee to the outstanding meal charge forecast invoice.

The Headteacher has the discretion to implement individual, personalised rates for childcare.

### **Staff Roles and Responsibilities**

The Headteacher and staff will ensure that the following applies:

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- No charges will be made for any activities which form part of the foundation stage curriculum requirements. No charge can be made for education and care during a child's qualifying funded entitlement.
- For any visits held during the normal session times incurring a cost to the school, parents will be asked for a voluntary contribution towards the cost, but no child will be excluded due to non payment. We will endeavour to give as much notice as possible so that parents can plan ahead. We will arrange for a system of payment by instalment to be in place for all trips. Some families may be charged a concession price if there are special circumstances. This will be at the Headteachers discretion.
- We acknowledge that offering opportunities on a 'first pay, first served' basis discriminates against pupils from families on lower incomes and we will avoid that method of selection.

### **Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation**

The School Business Manager and the Resources Committee of the Governing Body will monitor the impact of this policy by receiving regular reports on those activities that resulted in charges being levied, the subsidies awarded (without names) and the source of those subsidies. It will seek to evaluate the impact of the school's extended services on those children most in need of additional support.

Date reviewed: February 2019