Bretherton Endowed
Charging and Remissions Policy

Walking in the footsteps of Jesus with our Christian family, we learn, grow, achieve and flourish together in God's love.

This policy is for Bretherton Endowed CE Primary School and The Hub, Bretherton Endowed Out of School Provision.

Rationale
At Bretherton Endowed C of E Primary School we believe that all our pupils should have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities and visits (curriculum and extra-curricular) independent of their parents financial means.
This Charging and Remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities are offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some pupils taking full advantage of the opportunities.

Introduction
It is a statutory requirement that Local Authorities (LAs) and Governing Bodies determine and keep under review their policy on charging and remissions within the framework of the legislation. It is for individual governing bodies to determine their policy in relation to the Council's policy. The governing body's policy may be more or less generous than the Council's, as long as it meets the requirements of the law. Schools must maintain a written statement of their policy and make it available to parents on request.
Neither an LA nor a school can make charges for school activities unless a policy is in existence.
The objectives of the charging provision of the legislation are:

- to maintain the right to free school education;
- to establish that activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost;
- to emphasise that there is no statutory requirement to charge for any form of education or related activity, but to give LAs and schools the discretion to charge for optional activities provided wholly or mainly out of school hours;
- to confirm the right of LAs and schools to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school, or in support of any activity organised by the school whether during or outside school hours.

Legislation
The legislation:

- enables charges for education activities to be raised only in certain circumstances;

- enables voluntary contributions in support of any activity to be sought;
- requires a policy which, as a minimum, provides for complete remission of any charges otherwise payable in respect of board and lodging provided for a pupil on a residential trip where it takes place within specific criteria referred to in the legislation and where the pupil's parent(s) are in receipt of specified state benefits.

For the purposes of this Policy, the school day starts at 8.45 and ends 3.15. The school lunch time is not part of the school day.

Parents/guardians can view this policy on the schools website.

1. Admissions
There is no charge for admissions.

2. School meals
There is no charge for children who are entitled to free school meals or infant free school meals. Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount *per term* decided by the Local Authority who provide our school meals. This is currently £2.85 per day.

This section relates to the collection of school meals money and the approach to be taken in the case of debts arising when parents/carers fail to pay for school meals.
If debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for this. As a result, money which should be spent on all pupils' education in school is used to pay for debts incurred by individual parents/guardians. The governing body see this as unacceptable and request that all parents/guardians give this policy their full support.

3. Public examinations
There is no charge for examinations that are part of the curriculum and on the school's set examinations list, where children have been prepared for the examinations by the school.

4. Activities that take place during school hours (this does not include the break in the middle of the school day)
There is no charge for activities during school hours with the exception of music tuition **(section 8)**.

We may charge for:

- books and materials that the parent wishes the child to keep (the cost will be made clear to the parents before charge)
- optional extras **(section 5)**
- music or vocal tuition **(section 8)**
- 1 to 1 chromebook devices on a voluntary contribution basis (facilitated purchase)

5. Activities that take place outside of school hours (non-residential)
There is no charge for activities that take place outside of school hours when they are:

- part of the PE enhancements to our curriculum, *including sports matches against other schools*
- part of the curriculum.

However, we may ask for a contribution towards the costs for the following: • Travel • Materials and equipment • Non-teaching staff costs • Entrance fees • Insurance costs

Optional extras

- The school offers extra curricular activities provided by private professionals eg. Spanish, tennis, fencing which are available for parents to purchase.
- The school offers teacher led after school activities which pupils may attend with a contribution of between £2.00 - £5.00 per session to fund resources and equipment, electricity, heat and lighting for the session and staff CPD for leading the sessions. Costs are shared and will outline rationale.

The cost of optional extras

The headteacher will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities, and the levels of charge will be set annually by the headteacher on the recommendation of the finance committee. The charges, when determined, will be published on the school's website and appended to this policy.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. In no circumstances will there be an element of subsidy required for any pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge **(section 12)**.

When calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- non-teaching staff
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra
- the cost, or a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The school will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

6. Activities that take place *partly* during school hours either on or off site
Where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place during school hours the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in **section 4.**

Travelling time is included in time spent on activity.

In cases where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place outside of school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. So no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a visit.

In this case the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in **section 5.**

7. Residential activities

Our school will charge for:

Board and lodging
When any visit has been organised by the school where there may be a cost for board and lodging, parents will be informed of this before the visit takes place. The charge will not exceed the actual cost. **Parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from paying this cost** (see **section 11** for more guidance on remissions). This means that if you are in receipt of Free school meals, you may be exempt from paying this charge.

Travel
Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside of school hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per pupil.

8. Music tuition within school hours

Bretherton Endowed follows government legislation that states that all education provided during school hours must be free; however, private music lessons are an exception to this rule.

MUSIC TUITION

Link to Government guidance: -
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/2239/pdfs/uksiem_20072239_en.pdf

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition.

Charges may now be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's

parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. They also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989). Children Act 1989 (legislation.gov.uk)

Charges will be made if ***the teaching is*** *not* ***an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).***

The school may charge for teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given to either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument.

The school will not charge if the music tuition is part of the National Curriculum or public examination syllabus being followed by the student provided for by school.

9. Extended services

Bretherton Endowed *is* dedicated to providing a well-rounded and extensive education for our students which includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities (extended services). Extended services enable our school to provide:

- high-quality learning opportunities either side of the school day
- ways of intervening early when children are at risk of poor outcomes,
- ways of increasing pupil engagement
- ways of improving outcomes and narrowing gaps in outcomes between different groups of pupils.
- Our school has a before and after school club called the ‘HUB’ which is under the ownership of Bretherton Endowed Primary School. There are charges associated with before and after school provision which are detailed in the HUB Information to Parent booklet and our website. The fees will be set at our finance committee meeting and will always seek to provide good value for money provision for our school families. If a family in receipt of benefits is facing financial hardship, we encourage them to come into school to discuss their options.
- Utilising the HUB is considered to be an optional extra as detailed under the ‘ Charging for School Activities document May 2018.
- The Hub operates a payment on booking system to reduce incidents of arrears.

10. Damage to property and breakages

Where school property has been wilfully or recklessly damaged by a student or parent the school may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a pupil, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible.

Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the headteacher and dependent on the situation.

11. Remissions and concessions

The Governing body will give consideration to the remission of charges if the parent/guardian of a pupil is in receipt of free school meals, charges in respect of board and lodging may be remitted in full upon written request.

- Income Support
- Income based Job-seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (where the person is not receiving Working Tax Credit as well)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Income related employment and support allowance
- Universal Credit

Children of families who receive these payments are also entitled to free school meals.
Parents who are eligible for the remission of charges will be dealt with confidentially. The headteacher and chair of governors will authorise the remission of charges.
The school may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and pupils, and this will be determined by the governing body and headteacher.

12. Voluntary contributions

Our school may ask for voluntary contributions to the school for general funds and/or to fund activities that will enrich our pupils' education.

In any case where an activity cannot be afforded without voluntary funding, this will be made clear to the parents by the school. If the activity is cancelled all monies paid will be returned to parents.

There is no obligation for a parent or carer to make any contribution and the school will in no way pressure parents to make a contribution.

13. Inability or unwillingness to pay

Bretherton Primary *is* committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all pupils, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that child are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it will be cancelled.

The identity of the child or parents of the child who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

Signed by:

_____ **The chair of governors** **Date: .....**

_____ **Headteacher** **Date: September 2025**

Consideration has been given to the

- **DFE document 'Charging for school activities May 2018'(not updated)**
- **Charging for school activities (publishing.service.gov.uk)**
- **https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/2239/pdfs/uksiem_20072239_en.pdf**
- **The Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012 (legislation.gov.uk)**

Adopted : September 2025
To be reviewed before end August 2027

All aspects of our policy intends to comply within the Data Protection (GDPR) legislation.

Appendix 1

Residential

Children in year 4,5 and 6 are invited to go on residential trips. The costs of the trip include:-

- Accommodation
- Food
- Transport
- Insurance

The cost of school staff is not included. When we invite carers to support children who have special needs/ a disability, the carer will not be charged.

Pupil Premium children are charged 66% of the cost of the visit or in line with the statutory expectations laid out in the document.

Parents/carers will have the option of paying either small regular amounts over a period of time or larger amounts in a smaller number of transactions.

Appendix 2

School Payment arrears protocol.

INTRODUCTION

This policy provides guidance to help schools manage the collection of school meals or other income and the procedures to follow when debts arise if parents/guardians fail to pay. In line with our mission statement, Bretherton Endowed CE Primary School believes that our children and families are part of our whole school caring and Christian family. As such we would like to be supportive if families are facing any financial difficulties. It is important that if a family is facing financial difficulties or money worries, that they contact the school office or Head teacher to outline the difficulties and seek guidance and signpost to people who may be able to help. It will also enable school to set payments at a mutually acceptable and affordable level. This protocol is written in the event of no communication or a lapse in agreement when faced with arrears.

Providing a School Meal – Legal Advice

Schools are under no legal obligation to provide school meals other than to those children that have a statutory entitlement to a free school meal. Thus, unless a child is entitled to a free school meal, there is no obligation to provide a meal to a child that has not paid for it. If arrears exist, the school could refuse to continue to provide a school meal.

General

If debts arise in relation to facilities such as school meal, The Hub out of school club or private music tuition, we will follow this policy in order to recoup the debt and reserve the right under this policy to prevent the parent getting further in debt by limiting and further commitment.

If debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents. Every parent will agree that this is unacceptable and so as a school will will attempt to recoup any debts owed.

If parents / carers believe that their child(ren) may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals, they should contact Lancashire County Council for more details. Application forms are available from the Council's website at www.Lancashire.gov.uk or contact the school office or website for specific information. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that parents use it if they qualify.

We allow parents to pay costs within 30 days of taking the benefit. We do not invoice parents, but use an online payment system so that parents can check their outstanding balances at their convenience. They will receive a weekly text to outline monies outstanding, however a payment will not be seen as a 'arrears' until at passes 30 days. Any arrears of dinner money that arise, will be pursued by the school on a weekly basis.

Arrangements can be made to clear any dinner money debt by instalments, however, the amount should be acceptable to both the school and the parents. If a child has forgotten their packed lunch, schools should seek consent from the parent/guardian before providing the child with a school meal. In the event that consent cannot be obtained, it is a matter for schools to decide whether a meal should be provided. The cost of the meal will be charged to the school account, and therefore schools should seek to recover such cost from the parent/guardian.

Debt Recovery Procedure

If payment is not received after 30 days (4 weeks), a reminder text will be sent.(See stage 2 email) If no paymemt is made to clear the 'over 30 days another arears email will be issued to the parent within 7 days of non-payment requesting payment. (stage 3 email) If monies remain outstanding at the beginning of the second week school staff will issue a second reminder to the parent.(stage 4) This letter will advise the parent that if the debt remains unpaid the school may refuse to provide this service (For example: school meals; Private music tuition; The Hub sessions) and request contact with the school to discuss any problems in making the outstanding payment. If no contact is made, the Head teacher will attempt to contact the parents to discuss the matter further in an attempt to offer guidance to the family.

If dinner monies remain outstanding at the beginning of the third week a 'Final Warning' letter will be issued to the parent accompanied by a phone call by the Head Teacher. This letter will remind the parent of the previous reminder letter and the current amount outstanding. If dinner monies remain outstanding at the beginning of the fourth week (so the arrears are at 8 weeks) a 'notification of withdrawal of school meals' letter must be issued to the parent. This letter will give the parent a final opportunity to clear the outstanding debt. The letter will inform the parent that the child will not be provided with a meal with effect from the following Monday if the debt is not cleared in full and requesting that the parent makes alternative arrangements.

Reminder messages may also be sent by email or texts in line with our online process – typically Monday each week.

At each meeting of the Governing Body/Finance Committee, the Headteacher will advise the Governors of any outstanding debt using this process

Policy Approved by Finance Committee: September 2025

Policy to be Reviewed: August 2027

Initial letter/ contact after text reminders

Date:

Child's name:

Year Group:

Dear parent/ guardian

According to our records there is outstanding dinner monies for your child(ren).

As of *INSERT DATE* there is a total debt of £_____ for the period *INSERT DATE - INSERT DATE*.

Please make payment immediately by *Schools Electronic Payment System.*

If you have any queries, please contact the school office.

Regards

Headteacher

STAGE 3 DEBT RECOVERY PROCEDURE

Email content :

Parent or carer of XXXXXXX

DATE: XXXXXX

Dear Parent,

REMINDER – OUTSTANDING DINNER MONIES

STAGE 3 DEBT RECOVERY PROCEDURE

Email content :

Good afternoon

We seem to still have payments for school lunches that are more than 4 weeks outstanding. As a School we have to be seen that we are trying to recover debts that exceed 4 weeks and I'm sure you will understand.

I have generated a statement to show the payments that are still outstanding which I have attached . Could I ask that you check these to see if you are in agreement with this and let me know when we can expect payment?

Generate Student Statement via SchoolMoney and attach to email.If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely

School Bursar

Stage 4 – Hub letter

Walking in the footsteps of Jesus with our Christian family, we learn, grow, achieve and flourish together in God's love.

Date : …….

Dear Mr & Mrs …….

RE : OUTSTANDING HUB PAYMENTS

Our records show that £xxxxxx HUB monies is now due and that the arrears have exceeded 4 weeks. If this is an oversight, we would appreciate you making the required payments through SchoolMoney online. If you are having difficulties paying online, the School Office is available to help.

If, however, you are having financial difficulty in making this payment or you have any queries regarding the nature of the outstanding balance, I would urge you to contact the School Office on 01772 600431 in order that this matter be resolved.

You can pay via the online payment system. As your arrears balance is nearing £100 we are in a position to arrange a payment plan if you require one and would ask you to call the School Office to discuss how this may help you. *(delete if does not apply)*

Please confirm receipt of this letter and your agreement to clear the balance by signing the enclosed reply slip or alternatively call us on 01772 600431.

I hope that this can be resolved and would ask you to call us at your earliest convenience if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Clarke

Mrs Jayne Clarke
Headteacher

OUTSTANDING HUB PAYMENTS

Child's Name : ……

I confirm receipt of outstanding dinner payments letter dated …… and agree to clear the balance.

Signed : …….. Date : ……

Stage 4 – dinner monies letter

Walking in the footsteps of Jesus with our Christian family, we learn, grow, achieve and flourish together in God's love.

Date : …….

Dear Mr & Mrs …….
Arrears to date total £_____

RE : OUTSTANDING DINNER PAYMENTS

Our records show that £xxxxxx dinner money is now due and that the arrears have exceeded 4 weeks. If this is an oversight, we would appreciate you making the required payments through SchoolMoney online. If you are having difficulties paying online, the School Office is available to help.

Our records show that you have not cleared the school dinner money arrears for your child(ren) despite previous letters sent home on INSERT DATE and INSERT DATE.

In following the school policy on dinner money arrears, a copy of which is available on the school website, I must inform you that if payment is not received within 5 working days of the date of this letter, the debt will be referred to the authority for issue of an LCC Invoice. This would therefore be subject to LCC debt recovery policy.

I am obliged to warn you that the debt recovery procedure can result in additional costs and potentially a summons to court.

Until the debt is cleared, you must make alternative arrangements for your child(rens)'s lunch as no meals will be provided in school from INSERT DATE.

Please make payment immediately by Schools Electronic Payment System.

If, however, you are having financial difficulty in making this payment or you have any queries regarding the nature of the outstanding balance, I would urge you to contact the School Office on 01772 600431 in order that this matter be resolved.

You can pay via the online payment system. As your arrears balance is nearing £50 we are in a position to arrange a payment plan if you require one and would ask you to call the School Office to discuss how this may help you. *(delete if does not apply)*

Please confirm receipt of this letter and your agreement to clear the balance by signing the enclosed reply slip or alternatively call us on 01772 600431.

I hope that this can be resolved and would ask you to call us at your earliest convenience if you have any questions.
Yours sincerely

Mrs Clarke

Mrs Jayne Clarke
Headteacher

OUTSTANDING DINNER PAYMENTS

Child's Name : ……

I confirm receipt of outstanding dinner payments letter dated …… and agree to clear the balance.

Signed : …….. Date : ……

Parent or carer of XXXXXX

ADDRESS

DATE: XXXXX

Dear Parent, REMINDER – OUTSTANDING DINNER MONIES

Final Letter

Parent or carer of XXXXXX

ADDRESS

DATE: XX/XX/XXXX

Dear Parent,

FINAL WARNING – OUTSTANDING DINNER MONIES

Our records show that you have not paid dinner money for your child XXXX Class: XXX despite TWO previous written reminders dated xx/x/xx and xx/xx/xx. As at 07/09/20xx your account is showing a debt of £xx.xx

Please arrange for this money to be paid immediately. If you have a problem paying these arrears, please contact the school office to discuss. Non-payment of school meals affects the quality of service we offer to the children. We need to ensure that all payments are up-to-date and I am afraid that if the debt is not cleared by the end of this week it will not be possible to provide your child with a school meal. You will need to make your own arrangements for your child's lunch.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

After 8 weeks – removal of resource letter

Parent or carer of XXXXXX

ADDRESS

DATE: X/XX/XXX

Dear Parent,

NOTIFICATION OF WITHDRAWAL OF SCHOOL MEALS

Our records show that dinner monies are still outstanding for your child XXXXX Class: XX despite previous written reminders (and you have not contacted school do discuss this). As at XX/XX/XX your account is showing a debt of £XX.XX Unless this debt is cleared by Friday **DATE** I will have no option but to cease providing your child with a school meal. With effect from Monday **DATE** you will need to make your own arrangements for your child's lunch.

I sincerely regret this course of action but I cannot allow your arrears to increase. If you wish to discuss this, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

Office protocol summary

Walking in the footsteps of Jesus with our Christian family, we learn, grow, achieve and flourish together in God's love.

RECOVERING DEBT PROCECURES

DINNER MONEY, THE HUB, PRIVATE MUSICAL TUITION

STAGE 1

Each Monday a text/email is sent to those with outstanding monies owed to school which is repeated each following Monday until the end of week 4 of debt.

STAGE 2

On the Friday of the last day of the 4 week period a further text message is sent :

If you are having problems logging into SchoolMoney please contact the School Office who will be able to assist. Thank you.

STAGE 3

On the Monday commencing the 5th week where still no contact or payment has been received, an email together with Student Statement is sent. Marked as *High Importance* and both *Delivery* and *Read* receipts requested.

STAGE 4

If no payment received by the Friday following email then letter sent home.

STAGE 5

If nothing received by the Monday following the Stage 4 letter sent home, pass onto Headteacher.

STAGE 6

If the monies remain outstanding, a withdrawal of service letter will be sent and the HT will contact the parents to discuss the next steps for recovering the debt.

At every stage the school office will seek to resolve the issues face to face and with compassion and understanding if parents are having financial difficulties. Arrears plans

can be agreed and smaller regular payments set, however we would encourage parents to stick to these where possible.

We will not seek to put the family in a position where the debt is increasing.