



## Long Mountain CE Primary School and Pre School

### **CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY (including debt recovery policy)**

At Long Mountain CE Primary School and Pre School, each policy reflects the Christian ethos and values which are at our core. We are an inclusive Church of England school community where each child knows they are loved and valued for who they are and can grow to their full potential.

“let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5: 15-16

This policy was written/reviewed in:	November 2021
This policy was adopted by governors on:	17 <sup>th</sup> November 2021
This policy is due for review in:	November 2022
Signed by the headteacher:	
Signed by the Chair of Governors:	

## **INTRODUCTION**

This charging and remissions policy complies with statutory requirements, has regard to the Authority's policy statements on charging and is reviewed on an annual basis.

We try to operate a 'cashless' office. Nearly all payments should be made via Eduspot. We recognise there may be occasions on which a parent/carer needs to pay in cash and we will accommodate this need but we prefer and promote payments being made via Eduspot (online platform for receiving and monitoring payments).

## **CHARGING POLICY**

### **Activities without charge**

There will be no charge for the following activities:

- education provided wholly or mostly during school hours. This includes the supply of any materials, books, instruments, other equipment and also transport provided in school hours to carry pupils between the school and an activity;
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination which the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- instrumental and vocal music tuition which is part of the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Programme of Instrumental and Vocal Tuition (Wider Opportunities);
- instrumental and vocal tuition for children looked after;
- entry for a prescribed public examination including re-sits provided that a pupil has been prepared for it at the school.

### **Voluntary Contributions**

The school may ask for voluntary contributions towards the cost of school-time activities to assist with funding subject to the following conditions:

- parents will be informed at the outset that there is no obligation to pay for a particular activity.
- any children of parents who do not wish to contribute will not be treated any differently;
- where there are insufficient contributions to make the activity viable then the activity will be cancelled.

### **Chargeable Activities**

The school may recover the full costs of the following activities which may be provided directly or through commissioned services but charges will not exceed actual cost:

- Educational or other activities provided wholly or mainly outside school hours which are not:
  - (a) part of the National Curriculum;
  - (b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination which the pupil is being prepared for at school;
  - (c) part of religious education.
- board and lodgings on residential visits (subject to remission arrangements).
- cost of entering a pupil for a public examination not prescribed in regulations, and for the cost of preparing a pupil for that examination outside school hours.
- cost of entering a pupil for a prescribed public examination including re-sits where no preparation has been provided by the school.
- provision of instrumental and vocal tuition, which takes place during the school day and which has been requested by parents/carers.
- pre-school provision
- breakfast and after school clubs

### **Remissions Policy**

There will be a significantly reduced charge for board and lodgings for pupils whose parents are receiving the following:

- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- Child Tax Credit (provided that the family's income as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs does not exceed the specified amount for the relevant tax year
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;

Charges for other 'chargeable activities' may also be fully or partly remitted. Details of any remission arrangements will be made clear when parents are informed of charges for individual activities. Currently pupil premium funding may be used to support access to extended schools (both Breakfast Club and After School Clubs) where needed and appropriate.

## **DEBT RECOVERY POLICY**

### **1. General requirements**

Long Mountain CE Primary School and Pre School will take all reasonable measures to vigorously collect debts as part of its management of public funds. A debt will be written off only after all reasonable measures (commensurate with the size and nature of the debt) have been taken to recover it.

The school's debt recovery policy will observe the relevant financial regulations and guidance set out in the Scheme for Financing Schools and any other legal requirements.

### **2. Acceptable 'credit period'**

#### **Invoices**

In general, payment for all goods and services supplied by the School should be collected in advance or at least within that week of receiving these. If a small outstanding amount is owed (e.g. for a school dinner or one extended school session), the parents/carers will be informed via text.

#### **School Meals**

School meals must be paid for in advance. If a pupil is to have meals for the duration of the week or the occasional meal, monies must be received during that week. A text reminder requesting payment and stating the amount owed will be sent.

#### **Child Care Provision: Pre-school, Breakfast and After-School Clubs**

Childcare provision must also be paid for in advance where possible. If a child is to attend this provision for the duration of the week or on the occasional day, monies must be received during that week. See also pre-school charging and payment policy.

Music Lessons Parents of children who have peripatetic music lessons where this is charged by the school must pay in advance for lessons. It is the responsibility of the music teacher to ensure that children have paid for lessons before these are taken. The school is unable to pay music teachers retrospectively for music lessons that have been taken but where payment has not been forthcoming.

### **3. Reporting of outstanding debt levels**

The Headteacher/administrator will ensure that the level of outstanding debt is regularly monitored. Suitable records will be maintained to detail individual debts and the total value of debt to the school. Parents will be informed in writing when a debt is above £20 and Debt Recovery Procedures will commence, as detailed below.

### **4. Debt Recovery Procedures**

It is accepted that on occasion arrears may arise for various reasons e.g. pupils forget their dinner money, they are absent on the day it is collected or pupils need to use the Child Care provision for unforeseen circumstances. However, arrears cannot be allowed to accumulate above £20.

Where payment from the parent/carer has not been received over £20, the following process should be applied.

#### **Procedure for Collection of School Meals Arrears**

If the arrears for school meals accumulate above £20, parents/carers will be informed in writing of the amount owed and that no meals will be provided for their child(ren) if payment has not been received to clear the outstanding debts. Until this debt is cleared, you must provide a packed lunch. In a case when a debt payment is not received nor a packed lunch provided, we will phone to ask you to come to school with the money or to provide sandwiches before lunch time. Social services may also be informed that these parents are not carrying out the responsibility of care by not providing food for their children at lunchtime.

#### **Procedure for Collection of Child Care Provision Arrears**

If the arrears for child care provision accumulate above £20, parents/carers will be informed in writing of the amount owed and that they will no longer be able to use this provision if payment has not been received to clear the outstanding debts. Until this debt is cleared, parents/carers will have to find alternative arrangements for before and after school care.

#### **Significant Arrears**

If parents/carers accumulate significant arrears (of £100 or more), Shropshire County Council will be informed and legal proceeding may begin.

### **5. Staff Debt Recovery**

Staff debts can accumulate from staff school lunches they have taken. A standard letter will be given to staff at the end of each ½ term advising of the debt. In the cases of staff who are leaving the employ of the school, staff will be advised of the need to ensure all debts are paid before the end of their employment, advising their debts will be deducted from payroll.

### **6. Negotiation of repayment terms**

Debtors are expected to settle the amount owed by a single payment as soon as possible after receiving the 'overdue payment' reminder. However, if people are unable to pay, a sensitive approach to debt recovery will be carried out, taking the following factors into account:

Hardship – where paying the debt would cause financial hardship.

Ill health – where our recovery action might cause further ill health.

Time – where the debt is so large compared to the person's income that it would take an unreasonable length of time to pay it all off.

Cost – where the value of the debt is less than the cost of recovering it.

Multiple debt – where someone owes more than one debt to the School. In this situation, an attempt to agree one repayment plan to include all debts will be established.

If a debtor requests 'repayment terms', these may be negotiated at the discretion of the Headteacher/administrator. A record of all such agreements entered into will be

retained. In all cases, a letter will be issued to the debtor confirming the agreed terms for repayment. The settlement period should be the shortest that is judged reasonable. The Headteacher/administrator will decide whether any debtor who has been granted extended settlement terms will not be offered any further 'credit' and in future will be required to pay in advance.

#### **7. Costs of debt recovery**

Where the school incurs material additional costs in recovering a debt, then the Headteacher will decide whether to seek to recover such costs from the debtor.

The debtor will be formally advised in writing that they will be required to pay the additional costs incurred by the school in recovering the debt. This decision and its basis will be recorded and reported to the Finance and General Personnel Committee.