



Berger Primary School Finance and Charging Policy

Approved by:	Full Governing Body	Date: 29 th June 2022
Last reviewed on:	29 th June 2022	
Next review due by:	June 2023	
Sign By... John l'Anson.....	Name John l'Anson.....	Date 29/06/2022.....

This policy has been compiled recognising the difficulties placed on school in balancing the social welfare of pupils with the responsibility of managing the School Budget. Berger Primary School adheres to the Hackney Education's finance and procedures policy.

Charging

At Berger, we believe that trips and outings to places beyond the immediate locality contribute to the richness of learning for all children. We organise a range of outings for children on a termly basis to extend their learning and to enable them to experience what London and the localities beyond the city offer. In addition, we also offer Yr6 children a residential outing for a week,

We have a breakfast club for children aged 5 – 11 and a range of clubs and classes for pupils aged 5 –11. The clubs and classes are designed to enrich the curriculum, giving access to activities children might otherwise not experience. We are proud of this provision and its quality has been recognised by OFSTED. In accordance with the 1996 Education Act, which requires schools to have a policy on charging and remissions for school activities, this policy is reviewed annually.

No charges will be made for the following:

1. Educational activities provided during school hours and the necessary materials, books or other equipment to support this work.
2. Additional provision outside of school hours that supports the National Curriculum or prepares pupils for end of Key Stage Testing (such as booster provision for SATs).
3. Educational input provided on trips or visits taking place during school hours.
4. Additional teaching staff employed to facilitate school trips and outings taking place in school time.
5. Transport to alternative venues where the delivery of the National Curriculum maybe taking place (such as museums or galleries).

Activities that may incur additional costs:

1. Activities outside of school hours which are optional.

2. The board and lodging linked to any residential visit. If parents are experiencing hard ship they are offered the opportunity to speak to the head teacher in confidence.
3. Enrichment experiences outside of school hours and the National Curriculum.
4. The opportunity for pupils to buy their own musical instrument.
5. A reasonable charge for the Breakfast Club organised under child care provision.
6. A reasonable charge for a midday meal.
7. Additional items to support children's learning at near cost (such as book bags).
8. Contributions towards the cost of lost or damaged property due to negligence or vandalism.

Voluntary Contributions

1. The school may seek voluntary contributions in order to offer a wide range of experiences to the pupils, without which the possibility of the experiences would not be possible. All requests for voluntary contributions will stress the voluntary nature of the request. No child will be prevented from going on visits on grounds of cost.

Dinner Money

The school has a **NO DEBT** policy relating to school meals. Money owed affects the school overall budget and must be settled promptly.

The cost of a school dinner is currently £1.70 and is payable in advance. Parents are expected to pay on a Monday each week a minimum of a whole week worth or may be paid for half-term in advance if more convenient.

Parents and staff must pay online via ScoPay. We have invested in ScoPay which provides parents and staff the ability to pay for dinner money online if. This is the only option as we longer accept cash in the school main office.

If your child/children are absent their dinner money is credited for the following week. Notification of a change of meal arrangement from packed lunch to school meal, is made at the end of each term.

If a child forgets their packed lunch and is given a school meal, parents must pay for the meal on the same day or the following morning at the latest (except for children on Free School Meals).

Berger may allow a meal to be provided without payment where it is felt that this is a temporary situation. Details are recorded on the Tucasi dinner money system. The parents will be contacted as per the school's debt recovery policy. Berger Primary School will observe the relevant financial regulations and guidance set out in the

Hackney Education's Financial Handbook for Schools and any other legal requirements

Where a pupil continues to require meals and no payment is made, the matter is referred to the Head teacher who contacts parents and discusses the individual circumstances. If, in the opinion of the head teacher, failure to produce a meal could have serious consequences for that pupil, a meal will be provided as an emergency action.

If the outstanding debt remains unpaid the Governing Body will take action to recover this. A debt recovery letter will be sent to the parents informing them that the school reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to secure payment. Parents will be informed that further school meals for their children will need to pay at least a month in advance. As detailed in the School's Debt Recovery Policy.

Social services may be informed that parents are not carrying out their legal responsibility of care by not providing food for their child at lunchtime

School Trips & Events

Where there is a charge for any part of or all of the visit then a 'Voluntary Contribution' could be requested from the parents/carers of each child. If a contribution is not made the trip may have to be cancelled. The voluntary contributions are calculated for each visit based on the following factors;

- The charges of the provider.
- Transportation.
- Entry charges to facilities including those for adults who are supervising and/or accompanying the children.
- Any equipment hire.
- Refreshments.
- Staffing

If the overall cost of the trip or visit, including transport, exceeds £10 per child the school will consider subsidising the excess costs. However, it may have to be changed or cancelled if it is deemed too expensive.

Families who have genuine financial hardship will be offered support on an individual basis depending on circumstances. The head teacher, or the member of staff delegated responsibility, will make this decision.

All educational trips are approved and authorised by the Head teacher.

The Debt Recovery Policy

The school staff is expected to follow the following procedures to secure the collection of all debts.

Recording of goods or services supplied where payment is not received in advance or 'at the point of sale'. A record will be kept of all such supplies that details what was supplied, the value, the date(s) and the identity of the 'debtor', e.g. child, parent, hirer, etc.

Where invoices are raised these should state the date by which payment is due.

In all other cases correspondence with parents, etc. should indicate the maximum period that the school regards as reasonable before payment is overdue, e.g. contributions for a school trip should be received by, payment for items purchased should be sent to the school office by, etc.

Initial reminders

Initial reminders may be informal and made either in person (when a parent comes to collect/drop off the child) or by telephone. Normally, the school office administrator will undertake this having built up a good relationship with the parents.

First reminder letter

A formal reminder letter should be issued after 2 weeks from any informal reminder / the date of supply. If action is to proceed further, it is necessary to prove that all reasonable attempts have been made to recover the debt, and that these attempts have been made in a timely manner, i.e. at the time that the debt first became overdue. (Appendix 2)

Second reminder letter

A second reminder letter will be issued in 2 weeks after the First Reminder Letter. (Appendix 3)

Using reminder letters

Should a debt need to be taken beyond two reminder letters, formal written evidence may have to be produced. It is therefore important that at least one, but preferably two, written reminders are sent. Details of all reminders, whether verbal or in writing, should be maintained. Where a letter is issued, a copy must be retained on file.

Failure to respond to reminders / settle a debt

If no response is received from the reminders issued, a letter will be sent to the debtor advising them that the matter will be referred to the Head teacher.

At the discretion of the Head teacher the debtor may be advised that they will be required to pay in advance for all future supplies or the supply will no longer be available to them. This decision and its basis will be recorded.

Negotiation of repayment terms

Debtors are expected to settle the amount owed by a single payment as soon as possible after receiving the first 'overdue reminder'.

If a debtor asks for 'repayment terms' these may be negotiated at the discretion of the Head teacher who will inform the Governing Body. A record of all such agreements will be kept. A letter will be issued to the debtor confirming the agreed terms (unless this not judged necessary). The settlement period should be the shortest that is judged reasonable.

The Head teacher will decide whether any debtor who has been granted extended settlement terms will not be offered any further 'credit' and will be required to pay in advance in future.

Costs of debt recovery

Where the school incurs material additional costs in recovering a debt then the Governing Body will decide whether to seek to recover such costs from the debtor. This decision and its basis will be recorded.

The debtor will be formally advised that they will be required to pay the additional costs incurred by the school in recovering the debt.

Reporting of outstanding debt levels

The Head teacher will ensure that the level of outstanding debt is known and can be determined at any time.

The Head teacher and School Business manager will review the level of outstanding debts every month to determine whether this level is acceptable and whether action to recover debts is effective.

Bad debts

The Governing Body will authorise the write-off of debts below £1,000 after consultation with the Head teacher. Debts in excess of £1,000 but not exceeding £10,000 may only be written-off with the agreement of the Hackney Education's Schools Finance Manager (Ophelia Carter).

The Resources Committee will authorise the write-off of debts between £100 and £500 and notify the Full Governing Body of any write-offs.

The Head teacher will write off debts up to £100, following all reasonable steps to mitigate the loss, and informing the full Governing Body who will record any write off.

(Appendix 2)

Example of Letter (1)

Dear,

Re: Outstanding Dinner Monies –

I am writing to inform you that as of today's date £..... is owing for’s dinner money. School meals should be paid for in advance on the Monday of each week. We would therefore appreciate it if you could settle this outstanding amount.

If you would like to discuss this matter, please contact the school main office.

Yours sincerely,

Yusuf E. Gleason
Head teacher

Example of Letter (2)

Dear Parent,

Re: – School Meals

As of today's date £..... is outstanding for’s school meals.

I have spoken with pupil benefits and they have informed me that is not entitled to free school meals as they have not received a claim form. If you think that you are entitled to free school meals please contact the school office and we will send home the necessary paperwork for you to complete. However, meals do have to be paid for until confirmation is received from Pupil Benefits that the claim is correct.

Whilst there are monies owing for dinners we are unable to provide any further meals until the debt is cleared. Please provide with a packed lunch from

If you would like to discuss this or any other matter, please contact the school office. We look forward to receiving the outstanding amount as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Yusuf E. Gleason
Head teacher

Example of Letter (3)

Dear

Re: – Outstanding dinner money

I am writing to inform you that the amount outstanding for school meals for currently stands at £.

I have contacted you several times and informed you of this but as of today's date the amount has still not been paid.

I have now passed the overdue debt to our debt collection company who will be in touch with you direct or through the Hackney Learning Trust legal dept.

If you wish to discuss this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Yusuf E. Gleason
Head teacher