

# **Highbury Grove School**

## **Charging and Remissions Policy**

The policy was adopted by the governing body of Highbury Grove School on 8 February 2017

Review Date: Spring 2018.

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## Introduction

The Governing Body acknowledges the right of every student to receive free school education, and understands that activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time, must be made available to all students regardless of their parents/carers/carers' ability or willingness to help meet the cost.

The Governing Body also recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional activities, trips and residential experiences can make towards students' education and aim to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the students of the school and as additional optional activities.

## 2. The Legal Position

**a)** In general, no charge can be made for admitting students to maintained schools. The general principle that no charge can be made for education in school hours (excluding the midday break) in a maintained school, was first set out in the *Education Reform Act 1988*. Guidance came in the *Circular 2/89, Education Reform Act 1988:Charges for School Activities*.

The Circular explains that:

No charge can be made for any books, materials, instruments, equipment or transport for use in connection with education if the education is:

- within school hours;
- for the National Curriculum programme out-of-school hours;
- for statutory religious education; and
- for a prescribed public examination prepared for by the School.

### **b) Examinations**

No charge can be made for entry to a public examination on the Secretary of State's prescribed list, except where the student without good reason fails to attend or meet the requirements of the examination (e.g. fails to submit coursework) where the governing body or Local Authority originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee. An examination entry fee may also be charged to parents/carers if:

- the examination is on the set list, but the student was not prepared for it at the School;
- the examination is not on the set list, but the School arranges for the student to take it.

### **c) Admission**

No charge can be made in connection with admission to a maintained school.

### **d) Finished Products**

Where parents/carers have expressed a wish in advance to have a finished product made at school (e.g. in craft, art or food and nutrition lessons), a charge can be made at cost price. The parents/carers must know the charge for the product in advance

### **e) Board and Lodging**

A charge can be made for board and lodging on residential educational visits/activities, but the parents/carers who qualify for prescribed benefits and allowances are entitled to a remission of the charges. Guidance on how to check the eligibility (for remission of charges) of children whose families receive tax credits can be accessed via the Teachernet website at [www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk).

### **f) Transport**

Transport to and from home to any activity not provided by, but permitted by, the School, can be charged for (the main example is work experience). It is not possible to levy a

compulsory charge for transport or admission costs for swimming lessons or visits to museums etc.

during school hours.

### **g) Voluntary Contributions**

Parents/carers may volunteer to pay for any educational activity. The School may request voluntary contributions for any visits/activities both inside and outside school time. However no student may be excluded from the activity for not having paid the contribution. The School may ask parents/carers for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity that takes place during school hours;
- school equipment; or
- school funds generally

### **h) Permitted Charges**

The following are permitted charges:

- charges for board and lodging on trips;
- costs of lost and destroyed school property and breakages; (see appendix 1 for an approximate price guide). Letters will go home where the school has incurred repair costs.
- any costs associated with individual tuition in the playing of musical instruments, whether in or out of school hours, (unless it is provided as part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum);
- the cost of optional extras provided outside school hours (or mainly outside school hours), but the charge must not exceed the cost of the provision, and parents/carers must agree to their child receiving the optional extra;
- the cost of entering a learner for a public examination not prescribed in regulations, and the cost for preparing the learner for such an examination out of school hours; and
- re-sits of prescribed public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the School.

In all cases where a permitted charge is likely to be made the parents/carers must be told the amount in advance.

### **i) Activities partly during school hours**

In order to determine whether an activity that is undertaken partly during school hours and partly out of school hours the 50% rule is applied:

- **Non-Residential Activities:** if 50% or more is spent on an activity in school time (including travelling time, but excluding midday breaks) the whole activity is deemed to be inside school time, and cannot be charged for; and
- **Residential Activities:** if the number of half-days is counted (a half-day being any 12-hour period ending noon or midnight). If the number of days and half-days spent on the activity is greater than the number of school sessions (morning and afternoon sessions) that a learner would spend on a normal school day, the activity is deemed to take place outside school hours, and vice-versa. Travelling time is included in the time spent on the activity.

## **3. School Policy**

The law allows governing bodies to charge only for the defined activities if they have first made a policy on charging and remissions. Parents/carers will be made aware of the policy and it can be accessed on the School's website.

## **4. Third parties**

The School is permitted to charge for the provision of educational services by a third party, but the School must ensure that the monies are paid directly to the third party organisation. In such cases, if the activity is in school time, the School has to formally grant leave of absence to the students taking part, as the activity would no longer technically be part of the School's official programme.

It is likely, too, that any staff taking part in the activity would also have to be granted leave of absence. The Headteacher must consider carefully the position of accompanying staff, depending on the precise nature and duration of the visit.

## **5. The Governing Body Charging Policy**

### **a) Practical subjects**

Under normal circumstances, where parents/carers have indicated that they wish to own a finished product, no charge will be made. The School reserves the right to make such a charge (which shall not exceed the cost of the materials used by the learner) in particular circumstances and where parents have been informed of such a charge in advance.

### **b) School trips/residential school journeys**

It is School policy that, as far as is possible and affordable, curriculum-related school trips and journeys should form part of each student's Highbury Grove entitlement. For this reason there will be no requirement for any parent/carer to pay for these opportunities.

The School does welcome donations of up to the full cost of the trip to be made to the Highbury Grove School Foundation. These donations allow the school and the Foundation to continue to fund school trips and journeys in the future.

However the Governing Body does reserve the right to make a charge for residential school trips and journeys organised by the school in circumstances where, for example, the journey is deemed to be not primarily curriculum-based or where the cost of the journey would otherwise be prohibitive. In such circumstances:

- parents/carers will be informed in advance and offered a range of payment options if and when required; and
- parents/carers who qualify for prescribed benefits and allowances may be entitled to a remission of the charges.

### **c) Activities outside school hours**

Under normal circumstances there will be no charge made for extra-curricular activities organised by the School and taking place outside of school hours. However, the Governing Body reserves the right to make such a charge in particular circumstances, providing that:  parents/carers have been informed in advance; and

- parents/carers who qualify for prescribed benefits and allowances are entitled to a remission of the charges.

## **6. Voluntary Contributions**

The Governing Body reserves the right to ask parents/carers for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

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

Parents/carers may be advised that the continuance of an activity may depend upon voluntary contributions, but once it has been decided to run such an activity, no qualifying child will be excluded on the grounds of voluntary contributions.

## **7. Private Use of Facilities**

Private use of the telephone and photocopying facilities by students is not permitted. In the rare case of an emergency, a student may need to make a private phone call from a School telephone.

## **8. Remissions**

Parents/carers of pupils who are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a free school meals entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of charges:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and their annual income does not exceed £16,190; □ Guaranteed State Pension Credit.

When arranging a chargeable activity such parents/carers will be invited in confidence for the remission of charges in full or in part. The Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors will make authorisation for such remission.

## **9. Equal Opportunities**

The Headteacher will ensure that the school's Equal Opportunities Policies are observed in implementing this policy.

## **10. Responsibilities**

The Governing Body is responsible for making and reviewing the policy. The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of the policy and ensuring that staff, parents/carers and students know the details as appropriate. Other staff may be responsible for implementing the policy as part of their overall responsibilities.

## **11. Monitoring and Review**

The School Business Manager will report on the policy to the Headteacher as appropriate. The Headteacher will report to the Highbury Grove Resources Committee on any relevant aspects of the working of the policy as appropriate.

# Appendix 1

## Approximate charges for lost/ damaged property

### Replacement charges

Item	Cost
ID cards	£5
Lanyards	£1
Plastic card holder	£1
Planners	£1.50

### Premises damage

Item	Approx. Cost
Blind – varying sizes	Up to £800
Glass Panel in Door	£500
Door	£1,400
Small Window	£350
Large Window	£750+
Vision Panel	£100
Door Frame	£200
Locker	£25
Fire Extinguisher	£40
Lift Key Switch	£150