

Heckmondwike Grammar School

Policy: Charging and Remissions

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HECKMONDWIKE GRAMMAR SCHOOL ACADEMY TRUST

CHARGING AND REMISSION POLICY 2019/20

1. Introduction

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local education authorities in England. This legislation is further explained in the DfEs document 'A Guide to the Law for School Governors' and the DfEs guidance entitled Charging for school activities.

The content of these three documents continue to provide the framework that underpins this policy and this is acknowledged in the Academy Funding Agreement. Where an issue arises that is not specifically dealt with within this policy, decisions will be made which are in line with the spirit of the policy and of the three documents detailed above.

2. Education during School Hours

Charges are not made for admission to Heckmondwike Grammar School (the school) or for activities that take place during school hours. These activities include:

- Provision of teaching (all aspects of the curriculum)
- Anything required as part of the specification for a prescribed examination
- Examination entry fees for public examinations for which registered students are being prepared at the school (see section 9)
- The provision of books, equipment, materials or transport in relation to any activity that cannot itself be charged for. Parents may be asked to contribute voluntarily towards the costs of materials or ingredients where the finished product will then be owned by the student
- Non-residential school trips and visits that take place substantially (50% or more) during school hours (see section 3). A contribution towards costs may be requested but parents are under no obligation to contribute

3. Voluntary Contributions

3.1 Trips and Activities

Where charges are not made but where contributions need to be requested to ensure the financial viability of a trip or activity, information sent out to parents will include the following wording or similar:

'Under the School Governors' Charging and Remissions Policy, we request a contribution of £XX towards the cost of this activity. A student will not be excluded from the trip because her parents have not contributed. However, where such trips are dependent upon voluntary contributions, parents will be notified that sufficient contributions are necessary for the trip to go ahead.'

In addition, the following statement will be added to trip letters in order to clarify how any trip contribution surpluses will be used:

'When collecting monies for school trips, the cost of the trip usually includes a contingency to cover actual costs.

If, after meeting all the costs of a trip, the individual trip account is in surplus and this amounts to £5.00 per student or more, then the surplus will be shared out and a proportion returned to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of those students who originally contributed to the cost of the trip.

Where an individual trip account is in surplus but the surplus amounts to less than £5.00 per student, then the surplus will be retained by the school to be used for the benefit of pupils in any of the following ways:

- *To make a general financial contribution to the cost of the same trip in future years*
- *To make a financial contribution to the cost of running other trips in future years'*

The cost of specified school trips (both residential and non-residential) may be met in full or may be subsidised for those pupils attracting Pupil Premium funding. Details of any subsidy available will be announced at the start of each academic year, will appear in the Academy Pupil Premium Statement published on the Academy website and in letters or other communications with parents.

4. Activities for which charges are made

Charges may be made for:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment where the child's parents wish him/her to own them *
- Transport to education not arranged by the school or local authority
- Activities that are provided outside of school time that are not part of the curriculum, not part of any examination syllabus for which the pupil is being prepared by the school and not part of statutory religious education (section 5)
- Residential school trips (section 6) *
- Musical instrument tuition and singing lessons (section 8) *
- Certain fees associated with public examinations (section 9) *
- Photocopying for private use (section 10)
- Cost of damages (section 11)
- Lettings (section 12)

The cost of some activities (marked with a * above) may be met in full or may be subsidised for those pupils attracting Pupil Premium funding. Details of any subsidy available will be announced at the start of each academic year and will be publicised in the Academy Pupil Premium Statement published on the school web site and in letters or other communications with parents.

5. Charging for optional extra activities

Charges may be made for optional extra activities including staffing costs (teaching and non-teaching) as well as materials, books etc. provided in connection with any optional extra.

6. Residential School Trips

Charges will be made in respect of the board and lodging element of school trips. This is irrespective of whether the trip has occurred within school hours or not, or whether the trip has taken place to fulfill the requirements of the curriculum or as part of a prescribed syllabus. Additionally, if more than half of the trip takes place outside school hours, the remaining costs will be charged for in full.

The cost of specified residential school trips may be met in full or may be subsidised for those pupils attracting Pupil Premium funding. Details of any subsidy available will be announced at the start of each academic year and then in letters or other communications with parents.

The cost of each school trip automatically includes insurance.

7. Remission of Charges

Those pupils who attract Pupil Premium Funding (meaning they are or have been eligible for free school meals in the last 6 years) will attract an automatic financial subsidy for certain trips and activities.

Sixth form pupils may apply for financial assistance to fund relevant trips and activities through an application to the 16-19 Bursary Fund, the Bursary Fund is allocated to the school each year by the ESFA but is administered by the school. Details of the Bursary application process are provided on the school web site and are given to sixth form students at the start of each academic year.

Where a parent or guardian of a pupil is in a situation of financial hardship then they may apply for financial support for a trip through the Academy Welfare fund, a modest amount of money held to provide limited financial support in such cases. Applications should be made by writing to the Finance Director or Headteacher.

Charges for the hire of school premises are as per the published scale of charges and are set at a level to cover the cost incurred in hiring out the school and no discounts are given.

8. Musical Instrument Tuition & Singing Lessons

Instrumental music and singing lessons are provided for pupils at the school on the understanding that pupils take a full and active part in musical activities. The cost of lessons is currently subsidised by the Governing Body.

Every effort will be made to make sure that academic lessons are not missed with regularity because of the provision of music tuition. Where pupils persistently miss their music lessons through no fault of the school, parents will be notified of the situation. If absences continue, lessons will be terminated; unfortunately, refunds cannot be given for missed lessons.

Where a parent or guardian decides that tuition is no longer required, we require written confirmation giving half a term's notice in advance. If sufficient notice is not given, this can mean that costs are incurred by the school unnecessarily and payment equivalent to half a terms tuition fee will be charged in lieu of notice.

9. Public Examinations

As mentioned in section 2 above, all normal costs associated with prescribed public examinations are borne by the school. This includes any costs associated with re-marks and re-sits where the school has requested that these take place.

However, if a parent or guardian requests a re-mark, re-sit or a copy of an examination script, an amount will be charged to the parent to cover costs. This amount shall correspond to any relevant fee levied to the school by the examining body but may also include a small administration fee for each request.

There may be occasions when a request comes from another school to sit one or more of their students for an examination at Heckmondwike Grammar School. In this eventuality, and where this request is accepted, all costs associated with the examination plus a reasonable administration fee will be charged to the parents of those students. This also applies to private candidates and to former students who have now left the school.

10. Private Photocopying

All photocopying costs associated with provision of the curriculum are borne by the school. Private photocopying facilities are available to students and staff throughout the school.

11. Damages

These include any damages to the fabric of the school premises (such as a broken window) and the loss books or breakage of equipment. In such cases, especially where the damage is due to unacceptable behavior on the part of the student, parents will be asked to pay the cost of repair or replacement. Such charges may be reduced or waived on an individual basis if this is deemed to be appropriate on educational grounds, for example, in certain circumstances where a student has owned up to a misdemeanor.

12. Lettings

Lettings are not subsidised from resources provided for students' education and facilities will only be hired out where they are not needed for the purposes of education during that time.

Charges for lettings will be agreed in advance and will be levied in accordance with the schedule of charges agreed by governors (Appendix A). Discounts will not be granted to any organisation unless agreed by the Governing Body in advance of a letting taking place.

All hirers are required to sign up to the academy terms and conditions of hire and must demonstrate that relevant activity risk assessments are in place before the hire goes ahead. The Academy will request details of the hirer's insurance cover to compensate the school in the event of any damage being caused and to indemnify the academy in the event of incidents involved third parties.

13. Conclusion

The Governors wish to continue to offer students as wide a range of opportunities as possible and hope that parents will, where possible, look sympathetically on requests for voluntary contributions.