

## Heckmondwike Grammar School

**Policy:** Charging and Remissions

**Status:** Statutory

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## HECKMONDWIKE GRAMMAR SCHOOL ACADEMY TRUST

### CHARGING AND REMISSION POLICY 2024/25

#### 1. Introduction

##### 1.1. Legislation & guidance

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 [Academy Trust Governance Guide](#) (which replaced the [Governance Handbook 2019](#) (previously noted), and the DfEs guidance entitled [Charging for school activities](#).

Academies are required through their funding agreements to comply with the law on 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.

##### 1.2. Definitions

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities.

Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable.

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside normal school hours, we will follow the guidance referenced in section 1 to determine whether this is in 'School Time' or 'Non-school Time'.

#### 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 or 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 a link to this policy.

The School's approach is that under this Policy, students will not be excluded from a trip because their parents have not contributed. However, in most cases such trips are dependent upon sufficient contributions for the trip to go ahead.

When collecting monies for school trips, the cost of the trip usually includes a contingency.

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 future trips

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, and will appear in the Academy Pupil Premium Statement published on the Academy's website. Subsidies are always considered on a case-by-case basis to ensure equity of opportunity.

#### **3.2. Materials**

The school can request a voluntary contribution towards school materials or equipment and school funds generally. Examples are materials and ingredients for subjects such as design or food technology.

#### **3.3. Where the school receives no voluntary contribution**

Children of parents, and parents, who are unable, or unwilling, to contribute may not be discriminated against. However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are received to cover the cost of the visit, or activity and there is no alternative method to make up the shortfall, then the school should cancel the activity/visit. It would be advisable to make parents aware of a possible cancellation to the activity/visit if insufficient voluntary contributions are received from the outset.

#### 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 Academy's website. Subsidies are always considered on a case-by-case basis to ensure equity of opportunity.

#### 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 and other costs incurred by school. 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 will be publicised in the Academy Pupil Premium Statement published on the Academy's website. Subsidies are always considered on a case-by-case basis to ensure equity of opportunity.

The cost of each school trip automatically includes some insurance cover. For some trips it may be necessary to include additional insurance which would be charged to parents in full. This will generally be residential trips abroad that include higher risk activities like skiing.

## 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, are a previously looked after child or meet the service pupil premium criteria where a parent is serving full time with the armed forces) 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 website, <https://www.heckgrammar.co.uk/sixth-form/bursary/>, 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 making it fit for school use again, and no discounts are given, unless agreed in advance of the letting taking place by the Governing Body.

## 8. Musical Instrument Tuition & Singing Lessons

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 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 students/parents. Charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition. Charges cannot 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. 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).

The cost of lessons is currently subsidised by the Governing Body, on the understanding that pupils take a full and active part in musical activities.

The cost of lessons may be subsidised for those pupils attracting Pupil Premium Funding but is not guaranteed. Details of any subsidy available will be announced at the start of each academic year, and will appear in the Academy Pupil Premium Statement published on the Academy's website. Subsidies are always considered on a case-by-case basis to ensure equity of opportunity.

Lessons will not be timetabled until payment has been received. Parents are provided with detailed T&Cs specifically for music and singing lessons.

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. A student can withdraw from lessons but only with effect at the end of a term; therefore, the written confirmation must be received before the next payment date.

## **9. Public Examinations**

As mentioned in section 2 above, all normal costs associated with prescribed public examinations are borne by the school.

Where a student requests a re-mark, re-sit or a copy of an examination script, an amount will be charged to the student to cover costs. This amount shall correspond to any relevant fee levied to the school by the examining body but for re-sits will also include an administration fee for each request. A list of entry fees and charges is on the schools website. Where remarks achieve an improved result and the awarding body refund the school, the refund will be passed onto the student.

Former students who took exams in the previous academic year only, may request to sit examinations 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 approach also applies to university admissions tests, and exams for subjects not taught at Heckmondwike Grammar 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 and will be chargeable in full.

## **11. Damages**

These include any damages to the fabric of the school premises (such as a broken window) and the loss of 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. At the discretion of the Headteacher, 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.

Facilities will not be hired out where the continued use for certain activities may lead to unnecessary wear and tear.

Charges for lettings will be agreed in advance and will be levied in accordance with the letting of premises scale of charges agreed by governors, or based on a detailed quote through an agreed process, if the request is not listed on the scale of charges. As a minimum all scale of charges and any quotes will allow for cover during hire, cleaning afterwards and wear and tear.

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 involving third parties.

## 13. Responsibility & monitoring

The governing body have responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, which can be delegated to a specific committee. This has been delegated to the Finance & Risk Sub-Committee.

The Finance Director is responsible for implementing the policy, fairly and consistently. If staff are uncertain how the policy applies or have any queries, they should approach the Finance Director.

## 14. 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.