



# Holmer Green Senior School

## Charging and Remissions Policy

March 2021

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The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, including clubs and visits, can make towards a student's education. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the School as additional optional activities.

The relevant statutory provisions are contained in Chapter III of Pt VI of the Education Act 1996. This requires the Governing Body to determine and keep under review a Charging and Remissions Policy. Parents have a right to ask for this information and a summary must be included on the School's website.

There are two types of financial contributions for which parents can be asked in relation to educational activities:

- Voluntary contributions
- Permitted charges

They have different limitations as set out below.

#### **Voluntary Contributions:**

Nothing in legislation prevents a School Governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the School or any School activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the governing body or Head Teacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The Governing Body or Head Teacher **must** also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it must be cancelled. Schools must make sure that they make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Schools should make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on School visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions to the School funds, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and **not compulsory**. Schools should avoid sending colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments into the School or maintenance funds.

#### **Permitted Charges:**

Permitted charges are a direct request to cover certain costs involved with a School activity or visit. No charge can be made in respect of education provided during school hours (which excludes the midday break). Furthermore, no charge can be made for any education provided outside of school hours if this forms part of the syllabus for a public exam, or as part of the National Curriculum or religious education (non-chargeable education). A charge may be made however for board and lodgings on any residential educational visit.

#### **1 Materials and Textbooks**

Where a student or parent wishes to retain items produced as a result of art, craft and design, or design and technology, a charge may be levied for the cost of the materials

used. Students should provide 28 days' notice for collection of any work. In the case of Food Technology, students usually provide their own ingredients, but if the student forgets, the School provides the ingredients and may levy a charge. Textbooks are provided free of charge, but in some subjects, additional revision guides are available, for which a charge may be made.

## **2 Music Tuition**

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a regulation-making power which allowed the Department for Education to specify circumstances where charging can be made for music tuition. The new Regulations, which came into force in September 2007, provide pupils with greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition.

Charges may now be made for teaching either an individual student or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. Charges may only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student(s), or the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme (Wider Opportunities).

## **3 Residential Activities/Activities Outside School Hours**

If the activity is held outside school hours and is education other than non-chargeable education, then it is regarded as an "optional extra". A charge may be made for the full cost of the activity but must not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity. The charge may include the costs of travel, board and lodgings, additional staff costs, entrance fees, insurance, materials and equipment. However, the charge made to individual parents cannot include any cost added to subsidise parents of children who are unwilling or unable to pay the charge.

### **When is an activity held in school hours?**

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, Regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. A "half day" means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

#### **Example 1: Visit during school hours**

Students are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as nine half days including five school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

#### **Example 2: Visit outside school hours**

Students are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as seven half days including three school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

## **4 Examination Entries**

Students will be entered **once** for their external examinations in the subjects they are studying and the school will meet the cost from its delegated budget.

A charge will be levied in respect of examination entries for students, who are on roll at the school, where the school has not prepared the student for the examination. The school will only enter external students for exams in exceptional circumstances.

A charge will be levied for students whose entry needs to be removed after a parent or guardian has insisted on them being entered.

A charge will be levied for students who fail without good reason to attend a public examination for which the School has entered them.

A charge will be levied for students re-sitting an examination, except in exceptional circumstances at the Headteacher's discretion.

A charge will be levied in respect of examination entries for student where

- the School has prepared the student for the examination and it considers that for educational reasons the student should not be entered and the student's parent or guardian wishes the student to be entered (or the student him or herself when over 18 years old).

In these circumstances, if the student subsequently passes the examination, the school may refund the cost.

A charge will be levied for exam re-marks but this charge will be returned to the parent if the mark is subsequently raised by the Exam Board

## **5 Damage to, or Loss of, Property**

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials), the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide.

## **6 Lettings**

The school will make its facilities available to outside users. All HGSS lettings are managed by Lettings Guru who charge the school annually an agreed % of all lettings income for their service. Bookings Guru are responsible for managing all bookings and HGSS Casual staff are responsible for arrangements on site, security both during and after lettings and all Health & Safety arrangements relating to any particular letting. They also ensure that the premises are left clean for the next day of school and that school resources are safeguarded during the lettings period.

## **7 Other Charges**

The Headteacher, Finance Committee or Governing Body may levy charges for miscellaneous services up to the cost of providing such services eg. for providing a copy of an OFSTED report.

## **Remissions Policy**

Where non-chargeable education is provided during a residential visit, then the parents of a student who is eligible for Free School Meals shall receive a complete remission of any charges that would otherwise be payable in respect of board or lodgings.

Under current regulations children whose parents receive the following support payments are eligible for free school meals:

- Income Support
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit except if the parent meets ANY of the following criteria - entitled to working tax credit (regardless of income) have an annual income in excess of £16,385 (Please note that this figure is for April 2020 and that it changes in April each year. The current figure should therefore be applied)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

Where charges are to be made by the Governing Body for optional extras, parents may receive a remission for the whole or part of the charge as set out in the School's remissions policy.

Approved by the Governing Body at their meeting held on 20 March 2021

To be reviewed: March 2023