



# BRENTFORD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

## Charging and Remissions Policy

Rev	Date	Description
	<i>October 2024</i>	<i>Next review due</i>
4	October 2023	Reviewed
3	October 2022	Reviewed
2	July 2020	Reviewed
1	September 2018	Initial version

## **1. Introduction**

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on [charging for school activities](#) and [the Education Act 1996](#), sections 449 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements.

It is also based on guidance from the DfE on [statutory policies for schools and academy trusts](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

The aim of this policy is to:

- have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- clearly set out the types of activities that can be charged for and when charges will and will not be made
- offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some students from taking full advantage of these opportunities

## **2. Policy Statement**

During the school day, all activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, plus religious education will be provided free of charge.

Voluntary contributions will be sought for activities during the school day, which entail additional costs, for example, visitors to school and visits outside of school.

No student will be prevented from participating in any activity offered because her parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. If however insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity or visit it might not be possible for the activity/trip to take place.

On a very few occasions small amounts of money are left over after a school trip has taken place. If the amount left over would result in a refund of less than £1 per family then school reserves the right to keep this money and put it to good use by furthering the education of students less fortunate, subsidise trips that due to unforeseen circumstances end up costing more than originally expected, or for the good of the school.

## **3. Where charges cannot be made**

### **3.1 Education**

- Admission applications
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)

- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of
  - The National Curriculum
  - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school
  - Religious education
  - Instrumental or vocal tuition for students learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent/carer
  - Entry for a prescribed public examination if the student has been prepared for it at the school
  - Examination re-sit if the student is being prepared for the re-sit at the school

### **3.2 Transport**

- Transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered students to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for Students to be educated
- Transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

### **3.3 Residential Visits**

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of:
  - The National Curriculum
  - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school
  - Religious education
  - Supply teachers, covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying students on a residential visit

Charges will be made to cover the cost of residential trips. The cost of a trip will not exceed the actual cost to the school.

## **4. Where charges can be made**

Below we set out what we can charge for

### **4.1 Education**

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent wishes her to own them
- Optional extras (see section 4.3)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 4.4)
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities

- Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school and the student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus or if a parent or carer requests a re-sit and the school does not deem it to be necessary. The cost of the re-sit will be the actual cost levied by the Examination Board.

#### 4.2 School Meals and Lunch Cards

Food is served daily in the Dining Hall *unless unforeseen circumstances prevent us from doing this*. Prices are competitive and reviewed annually in line with the free school meal provision. A current price list and menu is available on the school website and will be available to parents/carers on request if they do not have access to a computer. All price increases will be notified in advance.

The canteen operates a biometric cashless till system in the dining hall; on admission to the school all students will have an impression of their finger taken to be used as recognition with this system. Credit can be placed on a student's account by using the school's online payment system using either a debit or credit card, *cash and cheques are no longer accepted by the school*. Should a parent not wish for their child to have a finger impression taken then a lunch card will be produced. Full details of the school's biometric system are available on the school's website. Students who lose their lunch card will be asked for a contribution towards the cost of a replacement. Should the school be prevented from taking a child impression of their finger due to unforeseen restrictions/circumstances then this will occur as soon as is possible once circumstances return to normal or restrictions lifted.

Parent/carers who think that a student might be eligible for free school meals and are in receipt of one of the benefits listed at the end of this policy should contact the Local Authority via their website to apply online for free school meals

[https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/info/20025/schools\\_and\\_colleges/61/free\\_school\\_meals](https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/info/20025/schools_and_colleges/61/free_school_meals)

Parent/Carers will be notified in writing the dates the free school meal provision will cover and it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to reapply when this expires. The school receives regular updates from the LA of students eligible for free school meals and updates records accordingly.

#### 4.3 Optional extras

We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not part of:
  - The National Curriculum
  - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the Student is being prepared for at the school
  - Religious education

- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the student to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing board has arranged for the student to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a student on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to students (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs and supervised homework sessions)

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (including supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra)
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra

Any charge made in respect of individual students will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other students who wish to take part in the activity but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those students who do not wish to participate.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra, which is charged for.

#### 4.4 Music tuition

Schools can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of students, if the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition. Payment for this service is paid directly to the London Borough of Hounslow and some financial assistance is available. Details of these lessons are available from the music department.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the National Curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme

- For a student who is looked after by a local authority

#### 4.5 Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

### **5 Voluntary contributions**

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 3 of this policy, the school is able to ask for voluntary contributions from parents to fund activities, which would not otherwise be possible.

The school may charge for, or require the supply of, ingredients and materials if parents have indicated a wish to own the finished product, if there is one. Written confirmation will be sought from parents indicating they wish to supply or pay for materials. Students will not be treated differently according to whether or not the materials are being provided by their parents. The school recognises that some of the practical work in some subjects is of an investigative nature and will not necessarily result in a 'finished product'; however it is an essential part of the learning process.

**There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay.**

If the school is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit then it will be cancelled.

### **6 Damage to property**

Parents/Carers will be asked to make a contribution to the cost of repairs or of replacing defaced, damaged or lost property where this is a result of a student's inappropriate behaviour.

### **7 Activities we charge for**

Parents will be informed of the charges for the coming year in the summer term each year.

### **8 Refunds**

Refunds for trips can only be made if costs have not yet been incurred for the trip. Refund requests will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Parents/carers will be notified if a payment is non-refundable.

The school reserves the right to withhold refunds if there are outstanding debts for meals.

### **9 Remissions**

In some circumstances, the school may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 4 and 6 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

#### **9.1 Remissions for residential visits**

Parents/Carers in receipt of the benefits listed below can make a request to the Headteacher for financial assistance towards the costs of visits such as residential trips that are part of the curriculum related to an examination course and evidence of these benefits will need to be provided:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit – provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if you apply on or after 1 April 2018, your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

#### **10 Monitoring arrangements**

The School Business Manager monitors charges and remissions, and ensures these comply with this policy. This policy will be reviewed by the School Business Manager annually.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Premises and Finance Committee.