

Hitchin Girls' School



Charges, Refunds and Remissions Policy

This is a statutory policy required of all academies

Date of issue:	February 2024
Trust Board approval:	March 2024
Review date:	February 2025

1. PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 Hitchin Girls' School wants all students to have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities, both on and off site, within and outside the curriculum, regardless of their family's financial means.
- 1.2 This charging and remissions policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities are offered and, at the same time, try to minimise the financial barriers which may prevent some students taking full advantage of the opportunities.

2. CHARGING POLICY

This policy does not apply to charges made and determined by other organisations offering activities and services on the school premises.

1	Public examinations	<p>No charge will be made for entry for a prescribed public exam, if the student has been prepared for it by the school.</p> <p>We may charge for non-prescribed public exams and for public exams where students are not prepared by the school.</p> <p>We may charge parents the examination fee if a student fails without good reason to complete the requirements of a public examination where the school originally paid the entry fee.</p> <p>We may charge parents the examination fee if a student /parent wishes the student to re-sit the examination where the school originally paid the entry fee.</p>
2	Trips/activities for students that take place during school hours ('School hours' are those when school is actually in session and do not include the break in the middle of the school day)	<p>No charge will be made for activities provided during school hours (with the exception of music tuition – see Section 5).</p> <p>However, parents may be asked to make voluntary contributions towards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Travel costs and tuition costs for any activity or visit ● Material costs for any activity – a general contribution may be requested to support funding the cost of art or technology projects, for example, and the actual cost charged if parents wish to retain the finished product.
3	Trips/activities for students that take place outside or mainly outside school hours (non-residential)	<p>Trips/activities which take place mainly out of school hours are chargeable.</p> <p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Where the majority of time spent on a non-residential activity is within school hours, we must treat the activity as if it is fully within school hours, and will apply the same criteria to charging as set out in section 2. ● If the majority of the time spent on a non-residential activity is outside school hours, we must treat the activity as if it happens fully outside school hours. <p>No charge will be made for an activity that takes place outside school hours when it is a necessary part of the curriculum or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at</p>

		<p>the school or part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education.</p> <p>Parents may however be asked to make voluntary contributions towards costs as outlined in 2 above.</p>
4	Residential trips	<p>Residential trips are classified as being within school hours if the number of school sessions missed by the students is at least 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip.</p> <p><i>Board and lodging</i></p> <p>For trips classified as taking place within or outside school hours, an amount up to the full cost of board and lodging will be charged unless students are legally entitled to remission. In such cases no charge will be made for board and lodging.</p> <p><i>Travel</i></p> <p>Where the residential trip is deemed to take place during school hours, no charge will be made for travel costs although a voluntary contribution may be sought.</p> <p>Where the residential trip is deemed to take place outside school hours, a charge will be made for travel to cover the unit cost per student unless the student is entitled to remission. Note: no paying student will be required to subsidise the cost of non-paying students.</p> <p><i>Activities on residential</i></p> <p>Where the residential trip is deemed to take place during school hours, no charge will be made for activity costs although a voluntary contribution may be sought.</p> <p>Where the residential trip is deemed to take place outside school hours, a charge will be made for the educational activities provided (see section 3).</p>
5	Music tuition	<p>Individual or group vocal or instrumental lessons provided during the school day are chargeable provided the tuition is provided at the parent/carer's request.</p> <p>Students studying GCSE and A Level music may be eligible for partial remission of vocal or instrumental music tuition fees. Where lessons are arranged through the Hertfordshire Music Service and take place at the North Herts Music School, fifty per cent remission of music tuition fees is given on half-hour lessons at GCSE and one-hour at A Level.</p> <p>Remission of music fees may be available for students whose parents are in receipt of benefits. Parents should contact Hertfordshire Music Service for further information.</p>
6	Damage to property and breakages	<p>The school may charge parents for the cost of replacing items/property broken, damaged or lost due to their child's behaviour.</p>

7	Remissions and concessions	<p>Students whose parents are in receipt of government benefits may, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of charges for board and lodging costs during residential school trips.</p> <p>We may choose to subsidise, in full or part, charges for certain activities where these charges can legally be made. Such subsidies are largely funded by the generous support of Hitchin Education Foundation.</p>
8	Voluntary Contributions	<p>Contributions may be invited for trips/activities which take place mainly within school hours. No student may be excluded because of inability to pay but the school is entitled to cancel the trip if the level of contributions does not meet its budgetary requirements.</p>

3. REFUNDS

If after completion of a trip or activity a surplus exists, the money will be applied as follows:

1. If the surplus is greater than 5% of the contribution per head, subject to a minimum of £10, then a refund of the full amount of the surplus will be offered to parents.
2. If the surplus is less than 5% of the contribution per head or less than £10, the surplus will be placed in the school fund.

4. DEBTS

When a parent/carer's debts are high and unresolved the school reserves the right to apply any income received from the family to its outstanding debts before providing chargeable goods/services.

Date: February 2024

Trustee approval: 19 March 2024