



CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

This policy is regularly reviewed following recommended guidelines.

Introduction

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities.

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.

The Governing Body of Honywood School recognises the value and contribution that the wide range of additional activities offered by Honywood School, including trips and visits, clubs and residential experiences, can make towards learning. The Governing Body aims to promote and provide such activities, both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for all learners of the school and as additional optional activities. The aim of this policy is to set out what charges will be levied for activities; what remissions may be implemented and the circumstances under which voluntary contributions will be requested from parents / carers.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body of the School is responsible for determining the content of the policy and the Headteacher for its implementation.

The Headteacher will ensure that staff are familiar with and correctly apply the policy. The Leadership Team and Governors will review the policy every two years.

The responsibility for determining the level of voluntary contribution is delegated to the Headteacher. Any determinations with respect to individual parents / carers will be considered by the Headteacher.

Education during school hours

Charges are not made for admission to Honywood School for learners or for activities that take place during school hours. These activities include:

- Aspects of the National Curriculum.
- Anything required as part of the specification for a prescribed examination.
- Examination entry fees for public examinations for which registered learners are being prepared at the school. This includes any costs associated with re-marks and re-sits where the school has requested that these take place. Failure by a learner to attend examinations for which they have been entered may also require reimbursement of the examination entry fee. If a parent or carer requests a re-mark, re-sit or a copy of an examination script, an amount will be charged to the parent / carer to cover costs. This amount shall correspond to any relevant fee levied to the school by the examining body plus a £5 administrative fee for the request.
- The provision of books, equipment, materials in relation to any activity that cannot be charged for as stated in the Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996. However, parents / carers may be asked to contribute voluntarily towards the cost of materials or ingredients (or provision of them by parents / carers) where the finished product will then be owned by the learner. The Governing Body reserves the right to charge for all ingredients and materials or require them to be provided if the parents / carers have indicated that they wish to own the finished product.

- Non-residential school trips and visits that take place (50% or more) during school hours. A contribution towards the costs will be requested but parents / carers are under no obligation to contribute.

A learner will not be excluded from the trip because his or her parents / carers 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.

- Hand-held technology owned by the school and used either inside or outside of school. Parents / carers will be required to read and sign the iPad Acceptable Use Guidelines. Should an iPad be damaged or stolen, parents / carers will be contacted and may have to fund the replacement device or make a contribution to cover the cost of the repair as all learners must return a fully functioning iPad, together with any accessories provided, at the end of their time at Honywood.

Charges

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school:

1. Residential school trips:

The board and lodgings element of school trips will always be charged for. This is irrespective of whether the trip has taken place to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum or as part of a prescribed syllabus. Additionally, if more than half of the trip takes place outside school hours, the remaining costs (transport costs for example) will be charged in full.

Families may be eligible for financial support for residential trips and visits, this is assessed on a case by case basis in line with Government guidelines. If a family would like to discuss this and is seeking support, they should contact the Enrichment Leader.

Guidance from The Department for Education states; "When a school informs parents / carers about a forthcoming visit, they should make it clear that parents / carers who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging". Guidance for charging on school trips can be found at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706830/Charging_for_school_activities.pdf

2. Musical instrument tuition:

Instrument tuition fees are paid for by the School which is then reimbursed by the parent/carer of the learner receiving the tuition.

We offer individual sessions on all instruments with tutors from Essex Music Services.

3. Costs of damages:

These include any damages to the school environment (such as a broken window) and the defacing, loss or breakages of equipment for learning. In such cases, especially where the damage is due to unacceptable behaviour on the part of a learner, parents / carers will be asked to pay the cost of repair or replacement.

4. Activities that take place outside of school hours (non-residential)

There is no charge for activities that take place outside of school hours when they are:

- part of the National Curriculum (*including sports matches against other schools*)
- part of the syllabus for a public examination that the learner is being prepared for by the school
- part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education.

Optional extras

The school may charge for optional extras. Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is **not:**
 - a) part of the National Curriculum
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the learner is being prepared for at the school
 - c) part of religious education
- examination entry fee(s) if the registered learner has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- transport that is not taking the learner to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing body has arranged for the learner to be provided with education.
- board and lodging for a learner on a residential visit.
- extended day services offered to learners (e.g. breakfast clubs, after school clubs etc)

The cost of optional extras

The headteacher will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities, *and the levels of charge will be set annually by the headteacher.*

Any charge made in respect of individual learners will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of learners participating. In no circumstances will there be an element of subsidy required for any learners wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge

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
- 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 a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra.

- the costs of buildings and accommodation.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be based on parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The school will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

5. Work experience

The cost of travelling to and from home when learners are on work experience is to be met by parents / carers.

6. Remissions and concessions:

The school will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the following support payments (evidence will be required):

- Income Support
- Income based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (where the person is not receiving Working Tax Credit as well and has an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on
- Income related employment and support allowance
- Universal Credit

Children of families who receive these payments are also entitled to free school meals. Parents who are eligible for the remission of charges will be dealt with confidentially.

The headteacher and chair of governors will authorise the remission of charges.

The school may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and this will be determined by the governing body and headteacher on recommendation of the Enrichment Leader and within the feasibility of the school budget and available funds.

7. Voluntary contributions

The school may ask for voluntary contributions to the school for general funds and/or to fund activities that will enrich our learners' education.

In any case where an activity cannot be afforded without voluntary funding, this will be made clear to the parents / carers by the school. If the activity is cancelled all monies paid will be returned to parents / carers, excluding any pre-agreed non-refundable deposits.

There is no obligation for a parent or carer to make any contribution and the school will in no way pressure parents or carers to make a contribution.

8. Inability or unwillingness to pay

Honywood Community Science School is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all learners, and this means ensuring that no learner is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that learner are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for all learners to attend an activity, then it will be cancelled.

The identity of the learner, or parents of the learner, who are unwilling or unable to make payment for an activity, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

9. Refunds

Requests for refunds for trips will be considered on an individual basis and may be rejected if the school is unable to recoup the costs incurred.

In all cases of withdrawal, either voluntarily or otherwise, applications should be made in writing to the headteacher. If approved, refunds will be processed via the original method of payment.

The school reserves the right not to refund costs where a learner is withdrawn from an activity by the school because of a learner's breach of the school's behaviour policy.

10. Evaluation and Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed once a year.