



The White Hills Park Trust
A Culture of Excellence

Charging and Remissions Policy

Version control

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| Scope: | Applicable to all Trust Schools |
| Review date: | Spring 25 |
| Statutory or non-statutory: | Statutory |
| Author/Reviewer: | Julia Gibbs, CFO |

Introduction

This policy applies to all Trust schools/academies.

Equalities

The Trust and its member schools/academies recognise their legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and this policy aims to ensure that all employees are treated with equality and fairness regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Version Control

| Version | Author | Date | Changes |
|---------|------------------|-------------|---|
| | Julia Gibbs, CFO | Spring 2024 | Re-order certain elements Further clarity on charges relating to residential trips. Update references to income level in remissions section, to reference "statutory maximum" Into standard Trust format |
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Introduction

Sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 set out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. Academies are required through their funding agreements to comply with the law on charging for school activities. This policy is based on DfE guidance for charging for school activities.

The White Hills Park Trust will ensure it informs parents on low incomes and in receipt of the benefits of the support available to them when being asked for voluntary contributions towards the cost of school visits.

For the purposes of this policy document, “parent” is taken to include any parent, carer or person with parental responsibility for a student. The White Hills Park Trust is referred to as “the Trust”. The term “school (s)” refers to all schools in The White Hills Park Trust and is used to acknowledge that activities are likely to take place in/be organised by individual academies rather than Trust wide.

1. Admissions

1.1 No charge will be made for admissions to a Trust school.

2. Education and public examinations

2.1 The White Hills Park Trust will not charge for:

- 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for by the Trust, or part of religious education;
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the student’s parent;
- entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it by the Trust; and
- examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) by the Trust¹.

2.2 The White Hills Park Trust **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child’s parent wishes him/her to own them;
- optional extras (see section 3);
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see page 3);
- certain early years provision²

¹ However, if a student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the student’s parents.

² The Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012

- community facilities³

3. Optional Extras

- 3.1 Charges may be made for some activities that are known as “optional extras”. Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement will be required before an optional extra for which a charge is made is provided.
- 3.2 Optional extras include;
- education provided outside of school time that is not part of the National Curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school; or part of religious education.
 - examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) by The White Hills Park Trust;
 - examination re-sit(s) if the re-sit request is made solely by the parent and not the school;
 - transport that is not required to take the student to one of the Trusts school sites or to other premises where the Trust has arranged for the student to be provided with education;
 - board and lodging for a student on a residential visit; and
 - extended day services offered to pupils (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, supervised homework sessions).
- 3.3 The Headteacher will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional extras, and the levels of charge will be set annually by the Headteacher on the recommendation of the Local Governing Body. The charges, when determined, will be communicated in a timely manner via letter or e mail and available on the academies online payment service.
- 3.4 In 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, this includes supply or agency teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra; and
 - the cost or a 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.

³ Powers to provide community facilities are under s.27 (1) of the Education Act

- 3.5 Any charge made in respect of individual students must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.
- 3.6 Furthermore, 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. Therefore, no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.
- 3.7 Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

4. Music Tuition within school hours

- 4.1 The Trust follows government legislation that states that all education provided during school hours must be free; however, music lessons are an exception to this rule.
- 4.2 Charges will be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s).
- 4.3 Schools may charge for teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given to either an individual pupil 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 sing. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument.
- 4.4 The school will not charge if the music tuition is part of the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.
- 4.5 The Trust is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils including access to specialised music tuition, therefore charges made for music tuition within school hours will be remitted for pupils on free school meals.
- 4.6 There is no charge for vocal or instrumental tuition for children in care. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.

5. Activities that take place during school hours

(This does not include the break in the middle of the school day)

- 5.1 There is no charge for activities during school hours, with the exception of music tuition.
- 5.2 There is no charge for transport during school hours to essential school-organised activities such as swimming lessons.

- 5.3 A voluntary contribution will be requested to cover the cost of educational visits and other activities. However, charges cannot be enforced where this forms part of the curriculum. Where the level of non-payment renders a trip financially unviable, consideration will be given to cancellation.

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

- 6.1 Where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place outside of school hours the charging of the activity will be the same as outlined in section 3 “optional extras”.

7. Residential Visits

- 7.1 The schools will not charge for:

- 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, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education; and
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

- 7.2 Schools will charge for:

- **Board and lodging**

When any visit has been organised by the school where there may be a cost for board and lodging, parents will be informed of this before the visit takes place. The school will charge anything up to the full cost of board and lodging on residential visits, whether it is classified as taking place during academy hours or not. The charge will not exceed the actual cost. Parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from paying this cost. (See section 12 for more guidance on remissions).

- **Travel**

Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place out of academy hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per pupil. These charges may not apply to those pupils entitled to remissions, but not other pupils will be charged extra to cover those costs.

- **Activities**

The academy may charge for residential activities that fall outside of academy hours (See section 6).

8. Refunds

- 8.1 Request for refunds for activities will be considered on an individual basis and may be rejected if the school is unable to recoup the costs incurred.
- 8.2 In all cases of withdrawal, either voluntary or otherwise, applications should be made by e mail to Finance@whptrust.org and the Trust finance team will liaise with the relevant school and trip organiser. If approved, refunds will be processed via the original method of payment.

9. Lettings

- 9.1 For hiring of Trust premises or facilities please see the Trust Lettings Policy.

10. Vandalism and damage to Trust property

10.1 The Trust will seek to recover the cost of repairs or replacement of property from parents/carers caused by a deliberate act of vandalism by a pupil or student.

11. Equipment on loan

11.1 The Trust reserves the right to charge for any equipment loaned to staff, pupils or pupils/children which is not returned or damaged.

12. Remissions and concessions

12.1 Parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits may be exempt from paying certain costs (including the cost of board and lodging related to residential visits);

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;
- Income Support;
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance;
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit, where the person is not receiving Working Tax Credit as well, and where the family's annual gross income does not exceed the statutory maximum level prevailing at the relevant date;
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit; and
- Working Tax Credit run-on

12.2 The Trust may support parents with a contribution to the costs of trips through the Post 16 Bursary fund. This is subject to application and parents will need to evidence they are in receipt of one of the above benefits.

13. Voluntary Contributions

13.1 Nothing in legislation prevents The White Hills Park Trust from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the Trust or any of the Trust's activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the Headteacher should make this clear to parents at the outset. The Headteacher must also make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

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

13.3 When making requests for voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents/carers must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory.