The Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School

Charging and Remissions Policy

SLT Lead: Joe Christopher

Reviewed by SLT: October 2023

Governor Committee Approval: 26th October 2023

Review Date: October 2024

INTRODUCTION

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities including school visits, after school clubs and residential experiences can make towards a student's personal and social education. The school aims to promote and provide such activities to enrich our curriculum and widen student opportunities.

Section 449-462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools maintained by local authorities in England. This is detailed in the 'Charging for School Activities' – Department for Education May 2018.

The term 'parent/carer' in this document refers to those adults having parental responsibility for a child.

GENERAL PRINCIPLE

School governing bodies and local authorities, subject to limited exceptions, cannot charge for:

- An admission application to any maintained school;
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any

materials, books, instruments and other equipment);

- Education provided outside school hours, if it is part of the National Curriculum or as part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at school, or part of 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;
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at BHBS;
- Examination re-mark(s) where the school agrees that this would be advantageous for the student then BHBS will pay, however where the parent wishes the paper to be re-marked, without school agreement, then the parent will pay for this facility.

School governing bodies and local authorities can charge for:

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the student's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- Music and vocal tuition if the tuition is a request of the student's parent. Charges may now be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the provision;
- Examination fees if a student fails to complete the requirements once the school has made the entry;
- Community facilities;
- Optional extras (explained below)

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments and equipment. The following criteria must be met:

- 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 school
  - Part of Religious Education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination at BHBS
- Transport that is not required to take a student to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the student to be provided with education
- Board and lodging for a student on a residential visit.

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

- Any material, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra;
- Associate staff;
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes 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.

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 student wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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 students on residential visits.

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.

OTHER CHARGES

- School uniform – It is expected that all parents/carers will provide their children the uniform/PE kit as defined in the prospectus and on the web-site.
- School sports – No charge is made to students who have been invited to represent the school in sporting fixtures against other schools. Students who have been selected to represent their County may be asked to contribute towards the expenses incurred.
- Breakages – Students will be required to pay for the cost of damage caused where this is a result of a student's carelessness or bad behaviour, e.g. broken windows etc.
- Fines –Small fines will be levied on students who fail to return their library books on time.
- The school charges for materials where there is an end product (e.g. Technology). All students take part in the activity without charge, but may not take ownership of the product without payment.
- Curriculum teams may levy a contribution for additional books/resources which are recommended as helpful. We will communicate full details to parents. No profits accrue and any discount is passed on to the student.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

The act permits voluntary contributions to be requested for any specific school visit and/or activity. In all cases where voluntary contributions are requested, parents/carers will be told the amount in advance.

If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions then this will be made clear to parents/carers at the outset. No individual student will be excluded from a visit/activity if their parent/carer cannot or chooses not to pay the voluntary contribution. However, the visit/activity may have to be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received.

SUPPORT FUND – PUPIL PREMIUM/ FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Where charges are made to parents, or voluntary contributions sought, these will be advised in advance and collected prior to the activity. Requests for help from parents on eligible benefits will be considered and assistance provided within the limit of any support fund that may be available. Complete confidentiality will be observed in all such matters.

Eligible benefits include;

- Income support
- Job seekers allowance (income based)
- Child tax credit, but are not entitled to working tax credit and your annual income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) does not exceed a predetermined amount
- Support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999
- The 'Guaranteed Element' of pension credit
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance

Where a parent does not receive an eligible benefit, the school will consider any application for assistance sympathetically.

REFUNDS

Refunds of charges or voluntary contributions received will be made in the following circumstances:

- Cancellations of trips or activities due to circumstances beyond the student's

or schools control

- The school deciding that a student should not take part in a trip or activity for whatever reason. Refunds will be reduced by the amount of any non-refundable deposits made
- Wherever a student, having entered for a public examination against the school's wishes, achieves a grade in that examination
- In the event that an examination re-mark requested by a parent or student is successful (the reimbursement of fees will be made by the examination board)

In other circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher

Approved by the Resource Committee of the Governors at the meeting held on 12th October 2023

Signed .....G.TAYLOR..... **Date** .....26 October 2023.....

Chair of Resources Committee