



Heartlands Community Trust
Charging and Remissions Policy

Circulated for consultation:	N/A	
Approved By	Directors Meeting	15 July 2018
Signed	Simon Garrill Chief Executive Officer	Jeff Twentyman Chair of Directors

1. Review and approval

- 1.1 Heartlands Community Trust (the “Trust”) is a multi-academy trust (MAT), and Directors have overall responsibility for the policy.
- 1.2 The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the operation of the policy within the Trust, as well as for the maintenance of records of concern raised in accordance with this policy and the outcomes. This will be delegated to the Head of Schools within the Trust.
- 1.3 This policy is reviewed every three (3) years by the School Leadership Teams (SLT), and is then ratified by the Trust.
- 1.4 The Data Protection Officer has contributed to the production of this policy and is involved in every review.
- 1.5 The policy has been revised for May 2018 in light of the imminent implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the forthcoming updated Data Protection Act 2018. The Data Protection Officer has contributed to the production of this policy and is involved in every review.

2. Introduction and aims

- 2.1 The Trust desires that its students to have an equal opportunity to benefit from school activities whilst both on and off site, within and outside the curriculum, regardless of their family’s financial means. This policy sets out the Trust’s approach to charging and remissions, and has been compiled in line with Department for Education (DfE) requirements and in accordance with:
 - Section 457 of Education Act 1996
 - DfE Governance Handbook (January 2017)
 - The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
 - Section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989
 - The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- 2.2 The Trust’s aim is to ensure:
 - all students are able to access all the provision on offer within its schools
 - transparency in setting charges

3. Charging

- 3.1 A summary is shown at Annex A, which details charging within the Trust. It must be noted that:

- During the school day all activities that are a necessary part of the National Curriculum plus religious education (as applicable) will be provided free of charge. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take students between the school and the activity. There will be **no charge** for any activity that is an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination or accredited course of study
- Voluntary contributions *may* be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs as required for the curriculum (for example, entrance fees to places visited – a museum – and any associated travel costs, or food technology ingredients or other materials which will be taken home when work with them has been completed). There will be no obligation for any parent to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of Trust activities (remission), and in those circumstances no student will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. (If insufficient funds are available it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities)
- From time to time the Trust may invite a non-school based organisation to arrange an activity during the school day. Such organisations may charge the Trust, who *may* then ask parents to make a voluntary contribution. Again, no student will be prevented from participating because his/her parents cannot or will not make a contribution. (If insufficient funds are available it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities).
- The Trust will charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example a visit to the theatre, school events. Such activities are not part of the National Curriculum or religious education (as applicable) nor are they part of an examination syllabus

3.2 A list of Frequently Asked Questions are shown at Annex B.

4. Calculating charges

4.1 The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents. When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of students participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who cannot or will not. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and/or fundraising.

4.2 Parents who would qualify for support are those who are in receipt of eligible benefits, these being:

- Universal Credit

- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Support under part V1 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, where the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and whose annual income does not exceed £16,190

4.3 Parents and carers in receipt of the following benefits are entitled to remission of charges for boarding and lodging costs during residential academy trips:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances
- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Support under part V1 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, where the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and whose annual income does not exceed £16,190
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- An income related employment and support allowance

5. GDPR

5.1 Under the Data Protection Act 2018, some of the information supplied under this policy may be classified as personal data (and in some circumstances 'special category data'). Where this is the case, the Trust will state the legal basis for requesting and processing the personal and special category data (e.g. record and use), which will be in line with the Trust's Privacy Notice (available on the Trust website).

5.2 Any data given will be kept strictly confidential but may be copied and securely transmitted electronically for use by those entitled to see the information as part of the process. Any personal data (or other) will be securely stored and retained only for as long as necessary to fulfil the purposes for which the information was collected, or as required by law.

5.3 If you have any queries or requests at any time concerning personal information held by The Trust or its practices in this regard, please write to: The Data Protection Officer, Heartlands Community Trust, Station Road, Wood Green, London, N22 7ST or email office@heartland.haringey.sch.uk.

6. Equality Statement

6.1 On considering this policy there are no significant issues. Equality will always be reviewed as and when necessary or in the light of any changes.

- 6.2 In accordance with its Public Sector Equality Duty, the Trust has given due regard to equality considerations in adopting this policy/procedure and is satisfied that its application will not impact adversely on members of staff or students who have a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender, reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, with the meaning of the Equality Act.
- 6.3 The Chief Executive Officer will report on whether there have been any appeals or representations on an individual or collective basis on the grounds of alleged discrimination under any of the protected characteristics.

Charging Schedule

	Area	Treatment	MAT School/s
1	Admissions	No charge will be made for admission.	All
2	School meals	No charge will be made for students entitled to free school meals or looked after children.	All
		<i>We will charge all students not entitled to free school meals an amount determined through consultation with the contractor or governing body of the school/MAT, as appropriate.</i>	All
3	Public examinations	No charge will be made for the entry fee if the examination is on the set list and the student has been prepared at the school.	All
		Where supported by school, we will not charge parents/guardians for the entry fee if the examination is on the set list, but the student was not prepared for it at school.	All
		Where supported by school, we will not charge parents/guardians the entry fee if the examination is not on the set list, but school has arranged for the student to take it	All
		<i>We may charge parent/guardians 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. This will be decided by the Head of School.</i>	All
4	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)	No charge will be made for activities provided during school hours (with the exception of music tuition – see Section 8).	All
		No charge will be made for transport during school hours e.g. to swimming.	All
		<i>A charge will be made to cover the cost of ingredients or materials where parents/guardians have confirmed in advance that they wish to own the finished product.</i>	All
4a	Snack Time	<i>We will invite voluntary contributions from parents/guardians at snack time</i>	The Grove
4b	Travel Training	<i>We may invite parents/guardians for a voluntary contribution towards travel training where the student owns a travelcard which is not providedt</i>	The Grove

5	Activities for students that take place outside school hours (non-residential)	<p>No charge will be made for an activity that takes place outside school hours when it is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a necessary part of the curriculum (b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school (c) part of the school's basic curriculum for religious education 	All
		<p><u>Optional extras</u></p> <p><i>We may charge for some other activities that take place outside school hours. The Head of School will decide which activities we make a charge for. The levels of charge (including any remissions) will be set as appropriate</i></p> <p>Where we make a charge, the total collected will not exceed the cost of providing the activity and no parent/guardian will be asked to subsidise the cost to other students by paying more than an amount equal to the total cost of the activity divided by the number of students participating. Costs we can legally recover are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (d) teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra; this includes (e) supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra (f) non-teaching staff any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra (g) transport to an activity outside school hours 	All
6	Activities that take place partly during school hours either on or off site (non-residential).	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 4.	All
		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, <i>and will apply the same criteria to charging as set out in section 5.</i>	All
7	Residentials (Residentials are classified as being within school hours if the number of school sessions missed by the	<p><u>Board and lodging</u></p> <p><i>We will charge students an amount up to the full cost of board and lodging on residentials whether it is classified as taking place within or outside school hours EXCEPT where students are legally entitled to remission. In such cases no charge</i></p>	All

	students is at least 50% of the number of half days spent on the trip)	will be made for board and lodging. See Annex B guidance for details of legal entitlements to remissions)	
		<p><u>Travel</u></p> <p>If the residential is classified as being within school hours, no charge will be made for travel costs (legal requirement), although, a voluntary contribution may be sought.</p> <p><i>Where the residential is classified as being outside school hours, a charge will be made for travel to cover the unit cost per student other than those entitled to remissions (but no paying student will be required to subsidise the cost of non-paying students).</i></p>	All
		<p><u>Activities on residential</u></p> <p>If the residential is classified as being within school hours no charge can legally be made for the educational activities provided.</p> <p><i>If the residential is classified as being outside school hours, a charge will be made for the educational activities provided (see section 5).</i></p>	All
8	Music tuition within school hours	No charge will be made if the music tuition is an essential part of the national curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student (including instrument hire, music books etc.).	All
		No charge will be made for instrumental and vocal tuition within school hours for children in care (including instrument hire, music books etc.).	All
		<i>We will charge for all other instrumental and vocal tuition requested by parents/guardians and delivered by specialist tutors within school hours, whether offered to an individual or group of students. Charges will be determined by the Head of School and the Finance and Resources Committee of MAT and may vary depending on size of group, length of lesson and type of instrument.</i>	All
		<i>The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme</i>	The Grove
		<i>Where we make a charge for instrumental and vocal tuition within school hours we will remit charges for students on free school meals and</i>	All

		<i>looked after children, as well as in certain other circumstances (e.g. for siblings) in order to ensure specialist music tuition is accessible and affordable for all children.</i>	
9	Uniform	<i>The school has a uniform that it encourages all students to wear properly. It seeks best value. Where it can it encourages parents to source elements of the uniform to ensure best value.</i>	All
10	Extended Day	<i>We will charge families for any extended day offered to children before and after school (and during school holidays), with the level of fees and any remissions to be set and reviewed regularly by the Finance and Resources Committee, and in accordance with any requirements set by the local authority where it is subsidising the provision.</i>	All
11	Damage to property and breakages	<i>We may seek to recover some or all of the costs incurred due to wilful damage or breakage of school property. This will be determined by the Head of School.</i>	All
		<i>We may seek to recover some or all of the costs incurred due to wilful damage or breakage of property belonging to a third party where the school has been charged. This will be determined by the Head of School.</i>	
12	Remissions and concessions	<i>We will comply with legal requirements for remissions as outlined throughout this document, for students defined as eligible.</i>	All
		<i>We may choose to subsidise, in full or part, charges for certain activities and students, as determined by the Finance and Resources Committee, advised by the Head of School. The circumstances in which concessions are applied will be reviewed regularly.</i>	
13	Trips	<i>Trips will be dealt with in line with the Trust Trips Policy</i>	All
14	Voluntary contributions	<i>We may in certain circumstances invite parents/guardians to make a voluntary contribution towards activities, computer equipment or events that are exempt from charging.</i>	All
		<i>Where we do ask for voluntary contributions, we will make it clear that children of parents/guardians who choose not to contribute will not be treated differently from those who do. No student will be excluded from the activity if their parents/guardians do not contribute.</i>	
		<i>If an activity cannot go ahead without sufficient voluntary contributions, this will be explained to</i>	

		<i>parent/guardians when the contribution is requested. If the activity has to be cancelled due to insufficient funds, all monies received will be returned to parents.</i>	
15	Community facilities	<i>We will charge to provide facilities that can be used by the local community</i>	All

Questions and Answers

Q What is a charging policy?

A Under the charging provisions set out in legislation, governing bodies, local authorities of maintained schools and academy trusts (this being the Board of Directors for the Trust) may choose to charge for certain defined activities, but only if they have first drawn up charging and remissions policies. These policies should be made available to parent/guardians on request. In the case of the Trust, this policy is also on its websites

Q A visit involving staying overnight has been arranged for children at my school. Can the school charge for this?

A Where a school activity requires students to spend nights away from home, the school is allowed to make a charge for board and lodging. This is with the exception of students whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits. The list of benefits to which this applies can be found [here](#). Since April 2003 the eligibility criteria that entitle families to an exemption from paying for the cost of board and lodging on residential visits have been aligned with free school meals eligibility criteria. The head teacher must inform all parents of the right to claim free board and lodging if they are receiving these benefits.

Q With regard to the remission of board and lodging payments, can you please explain who pays for the expense; would it come out of the school budget or is there a grant available to claim?

A Although the criteria for being eligible for the remission of charges for board and lodgings is the same as free school meals, that is where the similarity ends. The costs involved in the **remission** of board and lodgings are to be borne by the school from their contingency funds. There is no return to be completed to reclaim the money back.

Q Our school has a large number of students eligible for free school meals, this means that they would also receive remission for board and lodgings expenses for residential school visits. How can the school fund/organise residential visits?

A The Government funding for schools to each local authority recognises the different needs of each area. In terms of the allocation to schools, each local authority sets a funding formula which is agreed with the local schools forum – and is used as the basis for Trust funding. All local authorities are required to include an element in their formula to reflect the needs of deprived students. The amount that individual schools receive from the local authority reflects their relative need compared with other local schools.

In addition, schools receive student premium funding for disadvantaged students, based largely on those who are eligible for free school meals. This funding is provided by the government to raise the attainment of eligible students and narrow the attainment gap between eligible students and their peers. It is for head teachers and school governing bodies to decide how to use their formula funding and student premium allocation. Schools cannot exclude children from taking part in an activity that is part of the national curriculum purely on the grounds that the parent or carer cannot make, or refuses to make, a contribution. This can clearly place schools in some difficulty on occasions where a number of parents/carers might

be in such a position. The school then has to decide whether they can cover the costs of such activity from within the budget or by fundraising, or whether the activity has to be cancelled. If there is a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or which meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination, or is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge may be made either for the education or for the cost of travel.

Q Can Trust charge for educating children within the academy (schools)?

A The Trust cannot charge for education that takes place in school hours. Nor can they charge for activities that take place outside school hours if these are part of the National Curriculum, necessary as part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education. They can charge for permitted 'optional extras', provided they have drawn up a statement of general policy on charging and given details of 'optional extras' they intend to charge for. The Trust's policy does not have to be the same as the local authority's policy, as long as it meets the requirements of the law.

Q Can a school charge for an activity that takes place out of school hours?

A This kind of activity is often referred to as an 'optional extra'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. See guidance on optional extras.

The actual charge for the optional extra cannot exceed the actual cost of the provision. Schools cannot and must not make a profit from charging for 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 is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Q Can a school ask parents/guardians for voluntary contributions?

A Schools may invite parents/parents and others to make voluntary contributions to make school funds go further. All requests to parents for voluntary contributions must make it quite clear that the contributions would be voluntary. It should be remembered that education provided during school hours must be free. This includes materials, equipment, and transport provided in school hours by the local authority or by the school to carry students between the school and an activity. The Trust will ensure/explain that children of parents/guardians who do not contribute will not be treated any differently, and that the activity might be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received.

Q The school has sent letters out to parents asking for contributions towards a school visit, do parents/guardians have to pay?

A Head of School may ask parents for voluntary contributions towards the cost of:

- any activity which takes place during school hours;
- school equipment
- school funds generally

Children of parents who are unable, or unwilling, to contribute may not be discriminated against. However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are received to cover the cost of the visit, or activity, and there is no alternative method to make up the shortfall, then the school should cancel the activity/visit. It would be advisable to make parents aware of a possible cancellation to the activity/visit if insufficient voluntary contributions are received from the outset.

Q What happens if the school is not able to raise enough voluntary contributions to cover costs?

A Where there are not enough voluntary contributions, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, for example school funds and/or fundraising activities, then it must be cancelled. The possibility of the activity/visit being cancelled due to a shortfall in contributions should be made clear in the information sent to parents.

Q What if a parent/guardian is unable, or unwilling to make a voluntary contribution? How does this affect their child(ren)?

A The school cannot exclude a child from taking part in an activity that is part of the National Curriculum purely on the grounds that you, the parent or carer, cannot make, or refuses to make a contribution. This can clearly place schools in some difficulty on occasions where a number of parents/carers might be in such a position. The school then has to decide whether they can cover the costs of such activity from within the budget or by fundraising, or whether the activity has to be cancelled.

Q What support can a school offer a parent/carers who has difficulty making a financial contribution?

A Where a residential trip includes education for which charging is prohibited and the student's parent is in receipt of certain benefits, they will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging. The list of benefits to which this applies can be found [here](#). Schools must ensure that parents are aware of the support available to them when being asked for contributions toward the costs of school visits. Some schools also have funds available to enable families in financial difficulty to send their children on visits/activities.

Parents are encouraged to speak to the Head of School in order to establish if such funding arrangements exist. No charge may be made if there is a residential activity taking place largely during school time, or which meets the requirements of the syllabus for a public examination. In addition, if the activity is to do with the national curriculum or religious education, no charge may be made either for the education or for the cost of travel for any student, not just those whose parents are in receipt of benefits.

Q What about charges for transport during school hours?

A Any transport provided by the school in school hours will be provided free of charge (though a voluntary contribution could be requested).

Q Can the school charge for something like cooking ingredients or materials needed for a technology lesson?

A The school can make a charge to cover the costs of materials/ingredients for subjects such as design or food technology where parents/guardians have indicated in advance that they would like their child to bring home the finished product.

Q Can the school charge entry fees for examinations?

A An examination entry fee may be charged to parents if:

- the examination is on the set list, but the student was not prepared for it at the school
- the examination is not on the set list but the school arranges for the student to take it
- a student fails without good reason to complete the requirements of any public examination where the governing body or LA originally paid or agreed to pay the entry fee

Q Can a school make a charge to pay for the administration required as part of the admission process?

A Para 1.9 of the current School Admissions Code (as updated September 2017) rules out practices that can lead to covert selection, such as asking parents for a financial contribution as a condition of entry. We are clear that schools cannot ask for a voluntary contribution as part of the admissions process and where this is found, we will not tolerate it. Legislation prevents maintained schools from charging fees for admission or for providing education during school hours.

Q. Can a school ask for a direct debit to the school fund?

A No. A school may ask for voluntary contributions, as long as it is clear that they are voluntary, but we are clear that state education should be free and we have no intention of changing this policy. We will not tolerate this when it is brought to our notice. No contributions may be sought as part of the admissions process.

Q. Can a school ask parents to contribute to (or pay in full) the cost of a tablet or computer?

A. Sections 451 and 454 of the Education Act 1996 prohibits schools from charging for education and the supply of materials, books, instruments or other equipment (this would include tablets), during school hours. However, there is no prohibition on asking parents to make voluntary contributions. Additionally there is a specific exception in the legislation which enables schools to charge for materials where the student's parent wishes them to own the materials. All contribution requests to parents must make clear that the contributions are voluntary and that, if a parent cannot make or refuses to make a contribution, their children will not be treated any differently and will not be excluded from taking part in any activity or related equipment.

Q. What are community facilities?

A. Schools are allowed to provide facilities that can be used by the local community, for example out-of hours/holiday childcare or swimming pool sessions. These facilities further any charitable purpose for the benefit of students at the school or their families, or people who live or work in the locality in which the school is situated. Schools can charge for the use of these facilities, and a profit can also be generated, providing it is spent on the purposes of the

school and or on community facilities.. Academies must determine fees and charges in accordance with chapter 6 of HM Treasury's Managing Public Money.