Charging and Remissions Policy

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Brent River College Charging and Remissions Policy

Introduction
Under the charging provisions of the Education Act 1996, governing boards of maintained schools and academies must draw up a statement of their charging and remissions policy before they may charge for certain defined activities. Brent River College's policy can also be found on the College website.

Education legislation demands that schools, subject to certain exceptions, may not charge for education provided during school hours. However, schools are permitted to charge for other items and experiences provided to the students. Schools may also invite voluntary contributions to help support these provisions. Schools have a duty to inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of certain benefits that support is available towards certain costs when they are being asked to make contributions e.g. towards school visits.

Objectives and targets
The governing body of Brent River College has set up this policy for certain activities which take place in school. The purpose of this policy is to clarify which items and experiences that the school provides may have a levy charged upon them, how much of the cost the school expects parents to be charged and who will be offered support to pay for items and experiences for their children. This charging and remission policy is implemented within the letter of the law, and also embracing the spirit of it. It will be no less generous than the LA's policy.

1. Admissions
There is no charge for admissions.

2. School meals
There is no charge for meals for children who are entitled to free school meals. Students who are not entitled to free school meals may be charged a set amount decided by the school's Finance Committee.

3. Public examinations
There is no charge for examinations that are part of the curriculum and on the school's set examinations list, where children have been prepared for the examinations by the school. However, if the student fails without good reason to meet an examination requirement, by a non-submission or absence from the assessments or examination. The school may recover the fee incurred from that student's parents.

4. Activities that take place during school hours (this does not include the break in the middle of the school day)
There is no charge for activities during school hours with the exception of music or vocal tuition (section 8).
We may charge for:

- books and materials that the parent wishes the child to keep (the cost will be made clear to the parents before charge)
- optional extras **(section 5)**
- music or vocal tuition **(section 8).**

5. 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 set curriculum
- part of the syllabus for a public examination that the student 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 school's planned curriculum
  b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school

c) part of religious education

- examination entry fee(s) if the student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
- transport that is not taking the student to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing body has arranged for the student to be provided with education
- board and lodging for a student on a residential visit.

The cost of optional extras

Any charge made in respect of individual students will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. In no circumstances will a charge be made with an element of subsidy required for any students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge **(section 12)**.

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.
- Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of 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.

6. Activities that take place *partly* during school hours either on or off site

Where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place during school hours the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in **section 4.**

Travelling time is included in time spent on activity.

In cases where the majority of a non-residential activity takes place outside of school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those students who do not wish to participate. So no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a visit.

In this case the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in **section 5.**

7. Residential activities

Our school 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 school's planned 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

Our school may 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. ***We may charge anything up to the full cost of board and lodging on residential visits, whether it is classified as taking place during school 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 11** for more guidance on remissions).

Travel: Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside of school hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per student. These charges may not apply to those students entitled to remissions, but no other students will be charged extra to cover those costs.

Activities The school may charge for residential activities that fall **outside** of school hours **(see section 5)**.

8. Music tuition within school hours

Brent River College follows government legislation that states that all education provided during school hours must be free; however, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

Charges will be made if the teaching is **not** an essential part of either the school's planned curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student(s).

The school may charge for teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given to either an individual student 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 to sing. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument.

The school will not charge if the music tuition is part of the school's planned curriculum or public examination syllabus being followed by the student. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.

Brent River College is dedicated to ensuring equal opportunities for all students including access to specialised music tuition, therefore provisions are made to ensure our most disadvantaged children have equal access to the tuition provided by the school.

9. Extended services

Brent River College is dedicated to providing a well-rounded and extensive education for our students which includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities (extended services). Extended services enable our school to provide:

- high-quality learning opportunities either side of the school day
- ways of intervening early when children are at risk of poor outcomes
- ways of increasing student engagement
- Ways of improving outcomes and narrowing gaps in outcomes between different groups of students.

The total charge will not exceed the cost of providing the activity and no parent will be asked to subsidise others.

10. Damage to property and breakages

Where school property has been wilfully damaged by a student the school may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a student, and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible.

Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the headteacher and dependent on the situation.

11. Remissions and concessions

The school will give consideration to the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive the following support payments:

- Income Support
- Income based Job-seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (where the person is not receiving Working Tax Credit as well)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Income related employment and support allowance
- Universal Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax 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 the management committee 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 student, and this will be determined by the headteacher.

12. Voluntary contributions

Brent River College may ask for voluntary contributions to the school for general funds and/or to fund activities that will enrich our students' education.

In any case where an activity cannot be afforded without voluntary funding, this will be made clear to the parents by the school. If the activity is cancelled all monies paid will be returned to parents.

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

13. Inability or unwillingness to pay

Brent River College is committed to ensuring access and fair treatment of all students, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that child are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it will be cancelled.

The identity of the child or parents of the child who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

14. Monitoring and evaluation

This policy will be monitored and evaluated in the light of changes to legislation and comments received from parents and other interested parties.

15. Reviewing

This policy will be reviewed annually.