



# Bowden House School

## Charging Policy

Please note that, while the DfE's 'Charging for school activities' guidance is advisory, all schools are required to have a Charging and Remissions Policy, in accordance with the DfE's 'Statutory policies for schools and academy trusts'.

## **Contents:**

### Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Charging for education
3. Optional extras
4. Examination fees & resits
5. Voluntary contributions
6. Music tuition
7. Transport
8. Residential visits
9. Education partly during school hours
10. Damaged or lost items
11. School trip refunds
12. Loans to staff
13. Monitoring and review

## Statement of intent

Bowden House School is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all students, regardless of financial circumstances and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

In addition, we are committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school activities and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

We promise:

- not to charge for education provided during school hours
- to inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions.

Please note that while this policy may be more or less generous than the LA's, we have ensured it meets the requirements of the law.

Agreed: Spring Term 2021

Signed by:

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\_\_\_\_\_ Chair of Governors

Date:

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Review date: Spring Term 2022 – reviewed with no up-dates

Review date: Summer Term 2023

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## Legal framework

1.1. This policy will have consideration for and be compliant with, the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'

1.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies and procedures:

- **Complaints Procedures Policy**

## 2. Charging for education

We will not charge parents/carers for:

- 2.1 any aspect of education provided during school hours including the supply of materials, books, instruments or other equipment. This also extends to vocational options or extra-curricular activities
- 2.2 education provided outside of school hours any instrument or vocal tuition for students learning individually or in small groups unless the tuition provided is at the request of the student's parents/carers
- 2.3 entry for a prescribed public examination or examination re-sits prepared for by the school. However, if a student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement, the fee can be recovered from the student's parents/carers
- 2.4 any of the 'optional extras' listed under the DfE Departmental advice, 'Charging for school Activities, May 2018'
- 2.5 the school may charge for any materials, books, instruments or equipment where the student's parents/carers wish him to own them
- 2.6 any access to the range of therapeutic support for students which is included in the SEND funding for students from Tower Hamlets but is an addition for those students resident in outer boroughs. Details of these costings are listed on the Individual Placement Agreement for outer borough placements

## 3 Examination fees & resits

- 3.1 there will no charges made for examination entries
- 3.2 where a student is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, the school will pay the fee. Once students have left the school, resits must be taken at the school.
- 3.3 if a student or their parents/carers consider it to be in the best interests of the student to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved must be covered by the student's

parents/carers. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the school will not be charged by the awarding body and the parents/carers will have their fees refunded.

#### **4 Voluntary contributions**

- 4.1 when organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational/social experiences of the students, the school is fully responsible for funding such activities and does not, as a rule, request contributions from parents/carers. However, activities such as ski-ing trips do provide the opportunity for parents/carers to pay a nominal sum. School trips and visits do not depend upon parental contributions and parents/carers are informed that any contributions are voluntary
- 4.2 no student will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay.

#### **5 Music tuition**

all students study music (Expressive Arts) as part of the normal school curriculum. We do not charge for this. Under the DfE Departmental advice 'Charging for school activities, May 2018', schools can now charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size provided that the tuition is at the request of the student(s) parents/carers

#### **6 Payment for school meals**

- 6.1 Bowden House is a special, residential school and therefore does not make any charges for meals provided to students. The majority of students are entitled to free school meals
- 6.2 there is no charge to staff who take their meals whilst on duty and no charge to visitors, including school Governors, who take meals/refreshments in the school
- 6.3 parents/carers who visit the school to attend an Annual Review or other meetings concerning their son, will receive a school meal in the dining-room or a light lunch is provided during/after the meeting. There will be no charge for this as it is seen as support for their son and furthering the relationship between home and school
- 6.4 events held in the school such as the Open/Sports Day; Art Exhibition and the Christmas Concert, include a buffet lunch for all staff, students, parents/carers and other visitors. No charge is made for this provision
- 6.5 the school will supply all beverages; soft drinks; fruit and snacks, etc., for the students

#### **7 Transport**

Bowden House School does not charge for transport to or from school as this is the financial responsibility of the placing Local Authorities. The school has transport for escorting students who live in the LBTH. Taxis are provided for students who live in other placing authorities. The school provides transport in connection with all off-site trips/activities/visits, etc

#### **8. Residential visits**

if the school organises a residential visit in school time or predominantly during school time, this will essentially be under the ACE (Alternative Centre of Excellence) Department. This includes the annual camps and outdoor activities aimed at improving the confidence and independence skills of our students. The exception is ski-trips and curriculum based visits where there is a residential element and it becomes the responsibility of the relevant Department, if different from ACE. Parents/carers are informed of the arrangements for such trips and that any contributions are voluntary

## **9. Education partly during school hours**

if 50% or more of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours (including time spent travelling if the travel occurs during school hours), it is deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made

## **10. Damaged or lost items**

- 10.1 the school may charge parents/carers for the cost of replacing items broken, damaged or lost due to their child's behaviour. Parents/carers will not be taken to court for failure to pay such costs.
- 10.2 the school does not charge for any item of school uniform. However, there are occasions when items of school uniform are either deliberately lost or damaged. A letter is sent from the school to the parents/carers requesting a contribution to the replacement of the items. Likewise, if damage is caused to the fabric of the building, its transport or property within or outside the school building, parents/carers are asked to make a contribution to the repair or replacement of any damage up to one third of the value of the repair/replacement.

## **11. School trip refunds**

- 11.1 in the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded
- 11.2 in the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it is at the Headteacher's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The Headteacher will discuss options with the Governing Body, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip or refunding parents.
- 11.3 in the event that a student or their parents cancel the student's place on a trip, it is at the Headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The Headteacher will consult the Governing Body on the matter, taking into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the student's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another student
- 11.4 where a student or their parents/carers have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school has the right to refuse to allow the student to attend future trips
- 11.5 in the event that a student cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it is at the Headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The Headteacher will consult the Governing Body on the matter, taking into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the student's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another student
- 11.6 the school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all students and their families are treated equally
- 11.7 if a parent/carer wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

## **12 Loans to staff**

- 12.1 any loan of equipment to school staff or others outside the school, will be subject to the recipient having the necessary insurance to cover any item that could be damaged, lost or stolen. The recipient of any item that is signed out on loan, will be expected to pay for the loan of the item(s) and supply their own perishables or pay the school for their supply
- 12.2 all item(s) given out on loan must be recorded in the school's Loans Register

### Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body and Headteacher.

January 2021

Reviewed April 2022 (no updates)