



Charging and Remissions Policy

Headteacher: Ms C Senior
Chair of Governors: Mr S Fitz-Gerald

	Date	Name	Signature
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Verified by	Headteacher	Carrie Senior	
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Blackfen School for Girls

Purpose

- To ensure students are treated fairly in line with the Education Act 1996 and the School Admissions Code.
- To facilitate access by students at Blackfen School for Girls to the range of school activities and school visits, within and outside of school hours.

Education

Blackfen School for Girls **does not** charge for:

- admission applications.
- education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment) with the exception of basic equipment as stated in the Home School Agreement.
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum ⁽¹⁾, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education tuition for students learning to play musical instruments if the tuition is required as 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.

Blackfen School for Girls **can** charge for:

- any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the student's parent wishes her/him to own them;
- optional extras (see next section); and
- music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see page 3).

Public examinations

Blackfen School for Girls **does not** charge for:

- entry for a prescribed public examination as recommended by the school and if the student has been prepared for it at the school; examination re-sit(s) as recommended by the school and if the student is being prepared at the school and completes the preparation for the examination, as required. Blackfen School for Girls **can** charge fees in the following circumstances:
- An external student from another school requests use of Blackfen School for Girls as an examination centre or an ex-student of Blackfen School for Girls requests to use the school as an examination centre.
- A student currently on roll at Blackfen School for Girls requests to re-sit an examination against the advice of the Subject or Faculty Leader.
- A student currently on roll at Blackfen School for Girls requests to re-sit an examination with the approval of the Subject or Faculty Leader but fails to attend lessons or to complete revision and learning activities to the standard set by the school.
- If a student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee will be recovered from the student's parents/careers.

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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, or equipment.

Optional extras are:

- 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.
 - part of religious education examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school.
- Transport that is not required to take the 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.
- Part of the ‘National Curriculum’ is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g., geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the National Curriculum ‘inclusion statement’ (e.g., developing teamwork skills).

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.
- Non-teaching 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 will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. It will not include an element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity, whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In situations where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge will not include the cost of alternative provision for those students who do not wish to participate. Therefore, Blackfen School for Girls will not charge for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit.

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.

Voluntary Contributions

- If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, Blackfen School for Girls’ Governing Body or the Headteacher will make this clear to parents at the outset, including stipulating to parents/carers that there is **no** obligation to make any contribution.

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- Blackfen School for Girls will not exclude a student from an activity **simply** because her/his parents/carers are **unwilling or unable** to pay.
- If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, then it will be cancelled.
- If a parent/carer is unwilling or unable to pay, their daughter/son will still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. Blackfen School for Girls does not operate on a “first come, first serve” basis. If the total cost of a visit supersedes the voluntary contributions collected, a decision will be made by the Headteacher, in liaison with the Finance Department, as to whether the School Voluntary Fund can fund the cost difference.
- When making requests for voluntary contributions to the school funds, parents will under no circumstances be made to feel pressurised into paying, as it is voluntary and **not compulsory**.
- Direct debit or standing order mandates will not be sent to parents/carers when requesting for contributions.
- The policy for allocating places should be made clear to parents/carers by the visit organiser at the outset.

Residential Visits

Blackfen School for Girls **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 pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit.

Blackfen School for Girls **will** charge for:

- Board and lodging (the charge will not exceed the actual cost).

Blackfen School for Girls will make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be **exempt from paying** the cost of board and lodging:

Universal Credit Elements

- Housing Benefit.
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA).
- Child Tax Credit.
- Working Tax Credit.
- Income Support.

Other considerations

- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 assessed under the Government and HMRC guidelines.
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit.

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Music Tuition

Although the law states that all education provided during school hours must be free, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

- Charges **will** be made for teaching either individual students 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.
- Charges will only be made if the teaching is not an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the student(s).

Transport

Blackfen School for Girls **will not** charge for:

- Transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the London Borough of Bexley has a statutory obligation to provide transport.
- Transporting registered students to other premises where Blackfen School for Girls or the London Borough of Bexley has arranged for students to be educated.
- Transport that enables a student to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for that examination at our school.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Loss and Damage to School Property

- Parents/carers of a student who damages or loses any item of school property or equipment, including, for example, windows or computer hardware or lost text books, are liable for the costs of repair or replacement.
- Blackfen School for Girls **may** act as a mediator in cases where a student has damaged any of our neighbours' property.

Remissions

Circumstances in which Blackfen School for Girls propose to remit, wholly or partly, any charges which would otherwise be payable in accordance with the above Charging Policy, will be approached and assessed strictly on a case-by-case basis.

Considerations will be made in line with the relevant legislative framework, ensuring fairness to all students.

Parents in receipt of the below, will qualify for remissions:

Universal Credit Elements

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit

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- Child Tax Credit – provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if you apply on or after 1 April 2018, your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)
- Children in households receiving Universal Credit are generally eligible for free school meals, starting from the 2026/27 school year. While eligibility is automatic for Universal Credit recipients, parents will still need to apply for the benefit.

Other considerations

- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 assessed under the Government and HMRC guidelines.
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit.

The objectives within the Raising Attainment Plan, budgetary constraints and other relevant circumstances will impact on remissions.

A copy of this policy is available from the school or is available on the school website at <http://www.blackfenschoolforgirls.co.uk>.