



Charging and Remissions Policy

Head Teacher: Mr M Brown
Chair of Governors: Mr S Fitz-Gerald

	Date	Name	Signature
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Lead Person	Head Teacher	Matthew Brown	
Prepared by	Business Manager	Gary Morgan	
Verified by	Head Teacher	Matthew Brown	
Approved by	Chair of Governors	Stuart Fitz-Gerald	

The Governing Body of Blackfen School for Girls adopted this Charging and Admissions policy on 14th May 2020.

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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 it 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 Head Teacher will make this clear to parents at the outset, including stipulating to parents/carers that there is **no** obligation to make any contribution.
- 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.

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- 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 Head Teacher, 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

Music Tuition

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

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- 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 he has 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

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances (when credit is fully rolled out).
- Income Support
- Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance (Payable under the Jobseeker's Act 1995)
- Child Tax Credit provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008
- 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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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 web site at <http://www.blackfenschoolforgirls.co.uk>