

# **Underhill School and Children's Centre**



## **Charging Policy**

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## **Statement of intent**

Underhill School and Children's Centre is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, 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.

The school will:

- Never charge for education provided during school hours.
- Inform parents on low incomes and in receipt of relevant benefits of the support available to them when asking for contributions towards the costs of school visits.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Prescribed Public Examinations) (England) Regulations 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Financial Management Policy

## 2. Charging for education

The school will not charge for:

- Admission applications.
- Education provided during school hours, including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment.
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, or part of RE.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless provided at the request of the pupil's parent.

The school may charge for:

- Music tuition that is not prescribed as part of the National Curriculum. Charges will be made for music, instrumental hire and tuition. Grants may be available to cover part of the costs from the Barnet Arts Educational Trust (BEAT).
- Transport, entrance fees and education fees out of school hours. These are termed 'optional extras'. The consent of parents and a willingness to meet extra charges will be sought before any bookings are finalised.
- Nursery childcare outside of any free entitlement available to 2, 3 and 4 year olds (depending on our offer).
- Nursery lunches and childcare for children whose place is funded by EYVF if the funding does not meet the cost.
- Nursery lunches and childcare for children whose parents are in receipt of 30 hour nursery funding.
- Nursery lunches and childcare for children where parents have opted for their child to stay for lunch
- Breakfast and after school care, including late collection of pupils.
- Enrichment activities after the end of the school day.
- Damage to or loss of books and or school equipment.

- Wilful damage to school property
- The use of community facilities and other commercial activities.
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information.

### 3. Optional extras

The school may charge for the following optional extras:

- 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 pupil is being prepared for at the school
  - Part of RE
- Transport, other than that required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the LA has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils, e.g. breakfast or out-of-school provision
- Where an external provider runs a lunch time or after school club parents will be asked to pay the cost as identified by the external provider, and pay either directly to that provider or via the school's online payment portal. The school will then pass the payment to the external provider.

When calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- Buildings and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff, including TAs
- Teaching staff under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra

The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating pupils. A subsidy will not be charged for any pupils wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the school will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

The school will not charge for supply teachers to cover for teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges; therefore, parental agreement is a prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

If a charge is to be made for a particular activity, such as optional extras, parents will be informed of how the charge will be calculated.

## **4. Childcare in Nursery**

- a. Childcare fees are charged as per our price list in appendix A. These fees are reviewed annually and we will notify you with one month's notice of any changes.
- b. Parents/carers are required to pay a deposit of the equivalent of 2 week's sessions.
- c. If your child has a fee paying place in our Nursery you will need to provide us with at least one month's notice of your intention to end your child's placement with us or to decrease the number of sessions you have requested. If insufficient notice is given you will be responsible for the full month's fees for your child from the date of any change. Notice of changes/termination of agreement must be given in writing or by completing our "Notification of Changes" form.
- d. No refund will be given to periods where your child's day care placement is unfilled due to illness.
- e. No fee is charged when the nursery is closed due to bank holidays, staff training days, nursery fixed holidays or inclement weather conditions.
- f. In cases where payment for childcare is late without prior arrangement, your child's place may be terminated for chargeable sessions. In the first instance your holding deposit will be used to cover outstanding debt and then your child's place may be suspended until payment is received. If the holding deposit is used you will be required to pay a further deposit before the place is reinstated. Your child will be able to attend any funded sessions that he or she is entitled to. Any outstanding debts may be pursued through the small claims court.

## **5. Voluntary contributions**

The school may, from time-to-time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the school will make this clear to parents at the outset. The school will make it clear to parents that there will be no obligation for parents to make any contribution. Parents will be notified regarding whether assistance is available.

No pupil will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity and the school will set out how places will be allocated from the outset. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled and this will be made clear to parents.

The school will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions. Measures which may make parents feel pressured, such as colour coded letters and direct debit or standing order mandates, will not be sent when the school requests contributions.

## **6. Music tuition**

Instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007

allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the pupil's parents. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

Charging will not be made if the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum.

Charging will also not be made if the teaching is provided under the first access to the KS2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme.

No charge for music tuition will be made in respect of pupils who are LAC.

## **7. Transport**

The school will not charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide the transport.
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing board or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated.
- Transporting pupils to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at the school.
- Transport provided for an educational visit.

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

If 50 percent 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 will be deemed to take place during school hours and no charge will be made.

Whatever the start and finish times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into two sessions. School hours will not include the break in the middle of the day.

If less than 50 percent of the time spent on an activity occurs during school hours, it will be deemed to have taken place outside school hours and the school may charge for the activity; however, the school will not charge if the activity is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of RE.

## **9. Residential visits**

The 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 national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of RE.
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying pupils on visits.

The school may charge for board and lodging, but the charge will not exceed the actual cost. The school will seek to support families with costs if possible if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- 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
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are 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 four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

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

The school may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of pupils or their parents. Parents will only be charged the replacement cost to purchase the same or equivalent item. The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

## **11. Late payment fees\debt collection policy**

In cases where payment is late without prior arrangement, your child's place may be terminated for chargeable sessions. In the first instance your holding deposit will be used to cover outstanding debt and then your child's place may be suspended until payment is received. If the holding deposit is used you will be required to pay a further deposit before the place is reinstated. Your child will be able to attend any funded sessions that he or she is entitled to. Any outstanding debts may be pursued through the small claims court.

## **12. Late collection policy**

If you arrive to collect your child from school from their prescribed pick-up time (including Nursery) or afterschool club and are more than 15 minutes late you may be subject to charges as your child may have to be taken to our after-school club. See Appendix B

## **13. Staff discount**

Governors agree that current staff will be entitled to a 50% discount on fees for Breakfast Club, After-School Club and Enrichment activities. They will not be subject to any subsequent reduction for 2nd or further children in the family. Places must still be booked in advance.

## **14. Remissions**

The school will set aside a fund to enable parents in financial difficulty to send their children on visits and activities. The funding will be limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis, and if the full cost of the trip or



activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or activity will be cancelled.

Parents in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- 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 State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

To request assistance, parents should contact the school office.

## **15. School trip refunds**

All initial deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a school trip is cancelled by a party other than the school due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents.

In the event that a pupil or their parents cancel the pupil's place on a trip, it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

Where a pupil or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school will have the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits.

In the event that a pupil cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it will be at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another pupil.

In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it will be at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it will be at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the

trip. The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.

Once trip arrangements have been booked and confirmed, if contributions exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1 per pupil.

The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all pupils and their families are treated equally.

If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they will be able to do so via the Complaints Procedures Policy.

## 16. Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

The school's Freedom of Information Policy and Freedom of Information Publication Scheme will set out where fees may be charged for the provision of information.

## 17. Appendix A

### **Nursery Fees - term time only**

We offer a limited number of free 30 hour places in our nursery. The cost of lunch will need to be paid @ a rate of £7.50 a day.

#### *3 and 4 year old places (with 15 hours FEE)*

Full Day 8.45 am – 3.30pm £30.00 per day (inclusive of lunch)

Morning or afternoon session £22.50 (excluding lunch)

Lunch £7.50 per session

### **Breakfast and After School club**

Please pre-book places to ensure that there is availability

#### *Breakfast club*

7.30am – 8.45am (including breakfast) - £3.75 per day if booked by midnight of the previous day

- £5.00 per day if no pre-booking (subject to availability)

#### *After-School club*

End of School – 4.30 pm £5.50 per day

End of School – 6.00 pm £10.50 per day

(includes toast and drinks)

Late collection fees £5 for every 15 minutes late

2nd and subsequent children in a family subject to a 75% discount of full fee

## 18. Appendix B

Dear Parents and Carers,

### Late collections

Unfortunately, we are experiencing a high number of late collections each day with some parents not collecting their children for up to an hour after the school day has finished. As I am sure you will agree, this is not fair as there are children who go to After School Club, whose parents are paying for the extra session time.

We charge for late collection, from the following finish times:

Nursery:	Morning session	11.45am
	Morning session with lunch	12.30pm
	Afternoon session	3.30pm
R-Y6:	2.30pm or 3.20pm depending on your chosen finish time	
Afterschool club:	6.00pm	

The penalty charge will be added to your School Money account and the cost is as follows:

0-15 mins late	£5
15-30 mins late	£10
30-45 mins late	£15
45-60 mins late	£20

We do understand that sometimes lateness cannot be avoided and if you have called the school to inform us that there is an issue, we will not need to charge a penalty to you. However, if this happens regularly you will be liable for this charge.

We will keep you informed if we have any concerns about your child's attendance and punctuality. If you are experiencing any difficulties please come and talk to us and we will do all we can to support you and your child. We are here to help.

Thank you for cooperation in this matter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask,

Yours sincerely

Mrs Jennie Reed and Miss Nicola Hayles  
Co- Headteachers

