

GCSE /A Level Instrumental Tuition and Financial Support Guidance from Hertfordshire Music Service and Herts for Learning

Guidance from the Department of Education states that GCSE/AS/A2 instrumental tuition is part of the school's delivery and it is not an extra-curricular parental choice. Therefore parents should apply direct to the school for financial support for this tuition, and it is not claimable against Financial Support ('remission of music fees') offered through Hertfordshire Music Service.

Firstly, for all schools including academies, funding is delegated to support the school for the purposes of the school. Delivering GCSE music to students is one of the decisions the school must make in its curriculum.

Funding is now delivered to a school via the formula set by the DfE and funding is no longer "tagged" for a specific purpose except the "purpose of the school". The change to the Schools Funding formula has not reduced the budget responsibilities for schools indeed the trend is for schools responsibilities to increase.

The document which sets out the DfE requirements is ***Charging for School Activities (November 2013)***:

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/c/charging%20for%20school%20activities.pdf>

Relevant extracts are shown below:

School governing bodies and local authorities, **cannot** charge for:

- § an admission application to any state funded school- paragraph 1.9 (n) of the 'School Admissions Code 2012' rules out requests for financial contributions as any part of the admissions process;
- § 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 curriculum¹, 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;
- § instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent;
- § entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school; and
- § examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school².

¹ It should be noted that '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).

² However, if a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents.

3 The Education (Charges for Early Years Provision) Regulations 2012

Schools and local authorities **can** charge for:

- § any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent wishes him/her to own them;
- § optional extras (see page 5);
- § music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see page 6);
- § certain early years provision;³
- § community facilities.⁴

Music Tuition

Although the law states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule.

The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which charges can be made for tuition in playing a musical instrument, including vocal tuition. They allow charging for tuition in larger groups than was previously the case.

Charges may now be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent. Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff who provide the tuition.

The regulations make clear that charging may not be made if the teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. They also make clear that no charge may be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by a local authority (within the meaning of section 22(l) of the Children Act 1989).

In addition, the only responsibility the Authority has to academies is in respect of central budgets which are held on behalf of all schools e.g. certain licences and subscriptions. Music remission is not one of them.

Hertfordshire Music Service and Herts for Learning
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www.hertsmusicservice.org.uk/remission-criteria

www.hertsforlearning.co.uk