

Help with Music Fees (Music Remission) - Eligibility for Academic Year 2011/12

Hertfordshire Music Service

A guide to help with music fees for Parents and Carers

Students receiving Free School Meals and/or other benefits while living in and attending school in Hertfordshire may be able to receive financial support for instrumental or vocal lessons delivered by Hertfordshire Music Service (HMS). We also support children in the care of Hertfordshire County Council.

The local authority's remission funding is available for students in Year 3 and above to support lessons with Hertfordshire Music Service between September 2011 and July 2012. Students will only have remission funding renewed if the Music Service receives evidence of good attendance and progression in the student's learning.



**Hertfordshire County Council
Children, Schools and Families
Hertfordshire Music Service**

www.hertsmusicservice.org.uk/remission



How do Parents/Carers apply for help with music fees?

1. We recommend that parents and carers speak first to your school office, the school's Music Co-ordinator or Head of Music, or their local HMS Music Centre, to find out what lessons and activities they can apply for.
When you have made a choice, they can also advise you how to apply.
2. You will need to confirm your financial eligibility with Hertfordshire County Council. To apply online, go to www.hertsdirect.org/services/edlearn/canhelp/, or telephone Hertfordshire County Council's Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4048.
3. When financial eligibility is confirmed, your school or HMS Music Centre will apply on the parent/carer's behalf to Hertfordshire Music Service for funding to cover the specific lesson or activity that you are interested in.
4. Only after Hertfordshire Music Service confirms the acceptance of the application to you and your school or HMS Music Centre can the lessons begin.

Where can you get more details?

- **Parents/Carers** can check their eligibility for Help with Music Fees and other education benefits at this link - www.hertsdirect.org/docs/pdf/f/faqedbens

Important notes before you apply:

- Due to steadily growing demand and a fixed amount available to support Music Remission, the local authority expects that there may be more applications than we can support in 2011/12.
For this reason, applications for the academic year beginning September 2011 will be assessed by Hertfordshire Music Service on a first come, first served basis. Funding for continuing pupils will only be agreed on the basis of good attendance and progression by the student in the prior year, and this funding may be withdrawn or not renewed if the student's commitment to learning is unsatisfactory.
- From 15th June 2011, parents/carers can start to apply or reapply for remission funding for lessons to begin in September 2011. We recommend that you discuss with your school or HMS Music Centre what you need to do first.
- Remission funding will not be backdated. Lessons that start before Hertfordshire Music Service confirms the remission funding to the parent/carer and school/HMS Music Centre will not be reimbursed, and the school or Music Centre has to accept responsibility for these costs.
- Remission will not be offered to students in Year 2 or below, unless the student previously received remission in the academic year 2010/11.

What is the Remission of Music Fees scheme?

Students receiving Free School Meals or other benefits while living in and attending school in Hertfordshire may be able to receive financial support for the cost of instrumental or vocal lessons with Hertfordshire Music Service (HMS). We also support children in the care of Hertfordshire County Council.

There is help available to pay for music lessons with Hertfordshire Music Service if:

1. A pupil receives free school meals, or
2. A pupil's family receive certain benefits (for example Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Rebate or Pension Credit).

Parents/carers can check their eligibility for Help with Music Fees and other education benefits, through this link - www.hertsdirect.org/docs/pdf/f/faqedbens.

Who is eligible to receive Remission of Music Fees?

The Remission of Music Fees Scheme is available for a pupil committed to learning an instrument or to have vocal lessons if the following criteria are satisfied:

- a. The pupil lives in Hertfordshire.
 - b. The pupil receives Free School Meals or certain benefits (for example Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Rebate or Pension Credit).
 - c. The pupil receives instrumental/vocal tuition provided by Hertfordshire Music Service in Local Authority schools and Academies and HMS Music Centres.
 - d. Tuition takes place on Hertfordshire County Council premises, or premises specifically hired by the County Council.
 - e. The pupil is in full time education at a Local Authority School or Academy, and they are in Year 3 or above.
- If the Parent/Carer lives within Hertfordshire, but the child goes to a school outside of the county, you may be eligible for financial support for lessons that take place in Music Centres operated by Hertfordshire Music Service.
 - If the Parent/Carer lives outside Hertfordshire, but the child attends a Hertfordshire School, remission will only be offered if Hertfordshire Music Service has a reciprocal arrangement with your local authority. Before arranging the lesson, please contact Jenny Blanch (HMS) on 01438 844848 or emailing musicremission@hertscc.gov.uk, or speak to your local authority's Music Service.
 - **Note for Primary Schools/First Schools** - Remission will not be offered to students in Year 2 or below, unless the pupil previously received remission in the academic year 2010/11.

What lessons and activities can you apply for help with?

Help with music fees can be available for eligible students for the following lessons or activities:

- a. One individual lesson (either 20 minutes or 30 minutes long) OR
- b. One group or shared lesson of 30 minutes duration AND/OR
- c. One music centre ensemble

There is a maximum entitlement of one lesson (individual or shared or group) and one music centre ensemble.

It is important to note that ongoing remission of fees is subject to a report from the HMS instrumental/vocal teacher and review of the music register confirming that progress and attendance have been satisfactory.

What activities do *not* qualify for Remission?

Funding for pupils studying music at GCSE/AS/A2 levels is paid directly to schools. Therefore, parents or carers should apply directly to the school for financial support with these particular music lessons. Other sixth form pupils are eligible for assistance through Remission whilst they remain in full time education at a Local Authority school.

The following types of instrumental/vocal tuition are not eligible for the scheme:

- music tuition taken privately or
- at a college of further education or
- at university
- Schools that organise their own instrumental tuition outside the Music Service provision will arrange their own remission of fees scheme.

Late or retrospective applications cannot be considered or backdated. Lessons that start before Hertfordshire Music Service confirms the remission funding to the parent/carer and school/HMS Music Centre will not be reimbursed. Funding must be confirmed before tuition starts and no payment will be made for a past term or half term.

How much money is available through Remission?

The maximum funded amounts available between September 2011 and July 2012 for the different lessons are:

Lesson	Maximum Remission funding per student (per term)
A shared 30 minute lesson (2 students)	£94.00
An individual 20 minute lesson (1 student)	£122.00
An Individual 30 minute lesson (1 student)	£180.00

Group Lessons (of 3 or more students): The recommended funding for students in a group of 3 or more would be calculated by dividing the value of an individual 30 minute lesson by the number of pupils in the group.

Ensembles at HMS Music Centres: The cost of ensemble activities (and the value of the remission funding) will be confirmed by your HMS Music Centre at the time of booking.

Please note school charges may differ from the fees stated above.

- Children receiving Free School Meals or who are in the care of Hertfordshire County Council can receive free music lessons through this scheme. (100% Remission).
- Children qualifying on other benefits can receive funding for half of the cost of their lessons. (50% Remission). Parents/carers can check their eligibility for Help with Music Fees and other education benefits through this link - www.hertsdirect.org/docs/pdf/f/fagedbens.
- The funding is managed between your school or HMS Music Centre and Hertfordshire Music Service, and they can confirm the cost of the lesson or activity and the balance that you would still need to pay (for 50% Remission funding).
- Remission of music fees is subject to the availability of funds provided by the County Council.

When can a student begin lessons that are funded by remission?

- Lessons can begin as soon as (but not before) Hertfordshire Music Service confirms the award of Remission to the parent/carer and school/HMS Music Centre.
- Remission of fees is granted until the end of the current academic year (July), based on maintaining eligibility for the qualifying benefits and satisfactory attendance and progress. It can be awarded throughout the year, for lessons to start at the beginning of the following term or half term, subject to funding being available.
- Remission is awarded for a maximum of one academic year at a time, and all students need to reapply in June to be assessed for lessons to start in September.
- It is important to note that ongoing remission of fees is subject to confirmation from the instrumental/vocal teacher and evidence from the music register that progress and attendance have been satisfactory.
- If a family's eligibility for benefits changes during a term while receiving Remission funding for music lessons (for example, if they fail the Free School Meal eligibility audit), remission for music will be honoured to the half term or the end of that term (for up to six weeks maximum) and then withdrawn.

Important Note about reapplying for remission funding for each academic year (lessons to start in September):

- Parents/carers are advised to check with their school or HMS Music Centre in the summer term if they want to continue your music lessons in the new academic year. They may need to check your financial eligibility before the music service can confirm funding for lessons in the next term
- Free School Meal Students: Students who are eligible for Free School Meals in Hertfordshire and who are already receiving remission funding for music lessons will have their eligibility automatically renewed in June for the next academic year. Your school or music centre, however, will still need to apply to the music service for the funding if they wish to continue their lessons in September.
- Students not receiving Free School Meals: **every child receiving remission funding for benefits other than Free School Meals needs to re-apply for help with music fees in the summer term before lessons can be confirmed for the new academic year (Autumn Term)**. Renewal applications can be made to the Customer Service Centre or online from early June onwards.

What do you do if you want to cancel or change a lesson?

Parents/carers need to give half a term's notice to the school if they want to end or change their lesson. The school will inform Hertfordshire Music Service.

What do you need to do next?

1. We recommend that parents/carers speak first to their school office, the school's Music Co-ordinator or Head of Music (or their local HMS Music Centre) to find out what lessons and activities they can apply for.

When you have made a choice, the school or Music Centre can also advise you on how to apply.

2. Parents/carers will need to confirm their financial eligibility with Hertfordshire County Council. They can apply online at www.hertsdirect.org/services/edlearn/canhelp or telephone Hertfordshire County Council's Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4048.

Note for Free School Meal students: Students still eligible for Free School Meals and wanting to renew their music lessons for the Autumn term do not need to contact the Customer Service Centre – your school can apply to the Music Service for Remission funding on your behalf from Mid June.

3. When their financial eligibility is confirmed, your school (or their music centre) will apply through Solero on their behalf to Hertfordshire Music Service for funding to cover the specific lesson or activity requested.

4. Only after Hertfordshire Music Service confirms the acceptance of this application to the parents/carer and your school can their lessons begin.

How do children in the care of Hertfordshire County Council apply for help with music fees?

If a child is in the care of Hertfordshire County Council, they are eligible for free music lessons and may be able to have free loan of an instrument, subject to availability. When you have discussed the lesson that you would like with the school or HMS Music Centre, the Headteacher or Head of Centre will apply to Hertfordshire Music Service on your behalf.

For further information about loaning an instrument, please speak to your HMS music teacher or contact to Linda Small at Hertfordshire Music Service: email AIPS@hertscc.gov.uk or telephone 01727 860941 ext 204.