

## **Hertfordshire Music Service - Financial Support for Instrumental and Vocal Tuition** **Frequently Asked Questions for Parents and Carers**

For full details of the financial support scheme: speak to your School or Hertfordshire Music Service Music Centre, or go to [www.hertsmusicservice.org.uk/remission/](http://www.hertsmusicservice.org.uk/remission/)

### **1. What financial support can I apply for?**

**Students in Year 3 or above 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 with Hertfordshire Music Service (HMS). Support is available at two levels: for *Free School Meal* students and *Level Two*, for certain other qualifying benefits. Support is offered until the end of the academic year, to a maximum of 33 lessons, based on continuing eligibility, satisfactory attendance and progress by the student. Hertfordshire County Council offers this financial support scheme and we may operate a waiting list if we receive more applications than the available funding.

Before you apply, speak to your school or HMS Music Centre to find out what lessons are available, and for advice on what support you could receive according to the benefit(s) you are receiving.

### **2. I live in Hertfordshire but my child attends school in another county. Can we apply for help with music fees?**

Yes. Hertfordshire residents can apply for help for tuition for students **in Year 3 or above** that takes place in Music Centres that are operated by Hertfordshire Music Service.

### **3. I live in another county but my child attends a Hertfordshire school. What can I apply for?**

You should contact the local authority where you live to apply for any music benefits offered.

### **4. My child attends an Academy in Hertfordshire. Can I apply for any help?**

Yes, provided the lessons are provided by Hertfordshire Music Service, the child attends full-time education at the Academy, and the parent/carer is both resident in Hertfordshire and in receipt of qualifying benefits.

### **5. My child attends a Hertfordshire nursery school. Can I apply?**

Eligible pupils need to be in full time education at a Local Authority school or Academy in Year 3 or above in order to be considered for financial support for music tuition.

### **6. How do I apply for help with music fees for my child?**

There are five simple steps:

**a)** Speak to your school or Music Centre. They will advise you what lessons and activities you can apply for. When you have made a choice, they can also advise you how to apply and what you would pay in addition to potential financial support.

**b)** Check you are eligible. You will need to confirm your financial eligibility with Hertfordshire County Council. Applying is quick, easy and convenient and should take about ten minutes.

To apply online, go to (<http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/edlearn/canhelp/whathelp/>).

Alternatively, you can apply by calling Hertfordshire County Council's Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4048 (8am-8pm Monday to Friday, 9am-4pm on Saturday). The Customer Service Centre will write to you to confirm you are financially eligible for help with music fees. Please note, this does not guarantee financial support for music tuition at this stage.

**c)** Agree what you will have to pay. If you are eligible for Free School Meals, you need to pay £20 per term (or £10 if you start after half term) to your school or music centre in order to receive this additional financial support. *Please note this fee is not refundable.* Your school or HMS Music Centre will advise you what you need to pay if you apply for *Level Two* support.

**d)** Be recommended by your school or Music Centre. Your school or HMS Music Centre will apply on your behalf to Hertfordshire Music Service for financial support to cover a specific lesson or activity.

**e)** Wait for Hertfordshire Music Service to confirm financial support to you and your school or HMS Music Centre before starting tuition.

**7. When can I apply for help with tuition in the Autumn Term (from September 2016)?**

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016 is the date that applications for September 2016 will start being processed by the Customer Service Centre. Applications need to be received by HMS before Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September in order to be considered for the Autumn Term.

**8. I have received support before and want to continue, what do I need to do?**

If you are receiving financial support for music tuition during the summer term 2016 and qualify for Free School Meals, your benefits will be automatically checked by Hertfordshire County Council and, if confirmed, your School or Music Centre will be given an application on 8<sup>th</sup> June to complete with you.

If you are receiving *Level Two* financial support for music tuition during the summer term 2016 because you qualify for certain benefits, from 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016 you need to contact Hertfordshire County Council again (as outlined above) to renew your financial eligibility for the coming year.

**9. I have been on the waiting list for financial support for music lessons this school year. What do I need to do now?**

You need to follow the same steps as above to apply for financial support for September 2016 (including checking your current financial eligibility with Hertfordshire County Council). However, Hertfordshire Music Service will prioritise funding to students who have been on this year's waiting list over first time applicants.

**10. If my child is in Year 3 or above and I am applying based on their eligibility for Free School Meals, do I need to pay anything?**

Yes. All new and renewing applicants qualifying for Free School Meal support will need to pay £20 per term. The fee applies for lessons and is not charged for extra activities and ensembles in HMS Music Centres, where these are eligible for financial support.

**11. I will find it difficult to pay £20 each term. What can I do?**

Talk to your School or Music Centre who may be able to make arrangements for you to spread the payment.

**12. Is there a maximum level of financial support available?**

Yes. The maximum is for all or half of the equivalent of a 20 minute individual lesson, to a maximum of 33 lessons in the academic year, dependant on eligibility qualification. Eligible students having tuition at HMS Music Centres may be considered by the Head of Centre for financial support for up to 30 minutes individual tuition, if they are at the equivalent of Grade 5 level or above on their instrument; financial support for additional time for students receiving tuition in school is at the school's discretion and would be funded by schools (for example through the Pupil Premium).

**13. When can tuition start?**

After you have received written confirmation of financial support from Hertfordshire Music Service.

**14. Can I extend my lesson from 20 minutes to 30 minutes?**

You can discuss this with your school or HMS Music Centre, but the additional 10 minutes may not be supported under the scheme and you will need to pay the difference. Your school or HMS Music Centre will be able to advise you of the amount you would need to pay.

**15. What happens if my financial eligibility changes?**

Speak to your school or music centre. Eligibility for Free School Meals is rechecked every half term, and if your circumstances have changed, financial support will be withdrawn or reduced and you will need to pay if you wish tuition to continue.

**16. Can my tuition be withdrawn for any other reason?**

Attendance and progression is monitored for all students in receipt of financial assistance and the benefit will be withdrawn if there is unexplained poor attendance or commitment.

**17. Who do I contact if I still have questions?**

Please contact your School or HMS Music Centre about this scheme. Contact details for HMS Music Centres are available at [www.hertsmusicservice.org.uk](http://www.hertsmusicservice.org.uk).

*These details are correct as at 9<sup>th</sup> May 2016.*