

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee - For Decision	15 September 2014
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee - For Information	3 November 2014
Subject:	Public
Hampstead Heath Education charging report	
Report of:	For Decision
Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	
Summary	
<p>Run by the Education and Play Teams, the Hampstead Heath Schools Programme has continuously grown in popularity, and now reaches approximately 9,000 students per year. However, the charging structure for these sessions has remained constant since the Programme started in 2006, with the result that the current charges do not cover the associated teaching costs. This Report proposes adopting a new 'per session' charging structure, designed to cover the costs of the teaching, for implementation from September 2014.</p>	
Recommendation	
Members are asked to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is recommended that the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee reviews the current charging structure for the Hampstead Heath Schools Programme and agrees the proposed new charging structure, as outline in this Report. 	

Main Report

Background

1. The Hampstead Heath Education Service has operated as a dedicated Education Facility since 2006, when a classroom was opened at Parliament Hill. Since 2006, the service has educated over 36,000 students from the local community, including the Barnet, Camden, Islington and Brent areas. In addition, a range of informal education events helps to engage with families and adults in the area and spread important conservation messages to them.
2. The Play Team on Hampstead Heath focuses on informal learning activities, such as the facilitated play sessions that have formed an important part of the Heath community for more than 40 years. The Play Team currently manages a One O'clock Club for under-5s and their carers, in partnership with Queen's Crescent Community Centre, together with a full range of play opportunities at the Adventure Playground. Along with these activities, the Play Team also provides formal learning sessions to schools, as well as learning events based on the Heath or at the formal play-facilities.

3. The Hampstead Heath Education Centre provides low-cost, high-quality education sessions to schools. The cost of these sessions has remained constant since 2006, when a graduated pricing structure was adopted. The existing pricing structure is shown in Figure 1.

	Half day (2 hours)	Full day (4 hours)
Camden and Barnet state schools	£2.00 per student	£4.00 per student
Out of Borough state schools	£2.50 per student	£5.00 per student
Independent schools	£3.50 per student	£7.00 per student

Figure 1: The current pricing structure for school sessions at the Education Centre.

**NB all prices given in this Report include VAT.*

4. The Adventure Playground Schools Programme implemented a charging structure in 2010, having formerly been a free Programme. The pricing structure is shown in Figure 2.

	Art sessions (2 hours)	Full day (4 hours)	Organised play
Camden and Barnet state schools	£2.00 per student	£3.00 per student	£1.00 per student
Out of Borough state schools	£2.50 per student	£3.50 per student	£1.50 per student
Independent schools	£3.50 per student	£4.50 per student	£2.50 per student

Figure 2: The current pricing structure for school sessions at the Adventure Playground.

5. Both the Play and Education Teams have progressed working with schools steadily since 2006 and have seen significant growth during this time. Figure 3 illustrates the growth across the past seven years.

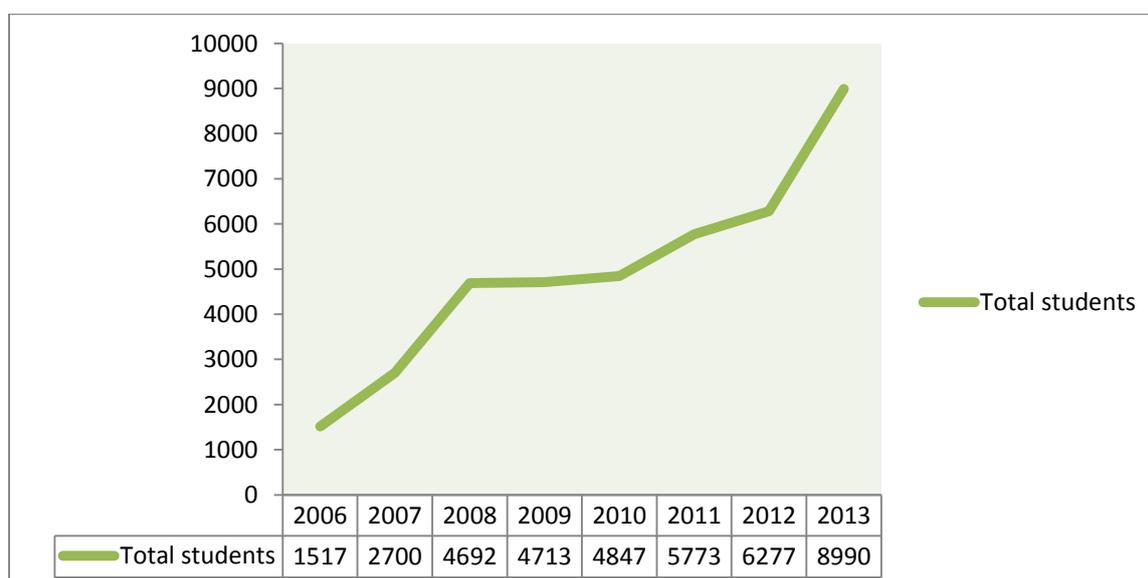


Figure 3: Annual growth in school sessions from 2006-2013 (based on calendar years)

Current Position

6. In 2013, the Hampstead Heath Education Centre educated 6,548 students and generated £15,396.50 income through this work. The Adventure Playground educated an additional 2,290 students in 2013. The income from these sessions goes towards paying for the casual teachers working on the sessions. The model is relatively successful, covering the majority of the casual teaching costs associated with the Schools Programme.
7. While the income generated at the Education Centre covers the costs directly associated with the Schools Programme, it does not cover the additional costs such as training, development, management, and other work.
8. Furthermore, the income from a session for a Camden or Barnet state school does not cover the cost of the casual teachers needed for that session. As a result, the income from independent school sessions is extremely important for the model, in order to cover teaching costs over the year. Figure 4 shows a breakdown of these costs.

	Cost of Field Teachers for a 2 hour session	Income from 2 hour session (based on average of 30 children)	Profit / Deficit
Camden/Barnet state school	£81.00	£2.00 x 30 = £60	-£21.00
Out of Borough state school	£81.00	£2.50 x 30 = £75	-£6.00
Independent school	£81.00	£3.50 x 30 = £105	+£24.00

Figure 4: Breakdown of cost, income and profit/deficit of the current pricing structure of school sessions

9. This model also assumes an average class size of 30 students for our current system of charging 'per student' for the sessions. When schools have smaller groups (for example, of 25 students), it becomes even more difficult for us to derive adequate income from the sessions.
10. Figure 5 illustrates the income generated at the Education Centre through our various pricing structures during the 2013-14 financial year. It highlights our dependence on income from independent schools to cover the costs of the Camden/Barnet state schools.

	Number of Students	Income generated
Camden and Barnet state schools	3,573	£6663.00
Out of Borough state schools	1,398	£3318.50
Independent schools	1,577	£5415.00

Figure 5: Income generated by the different bands of our pricing structure

Options

11. The Schools Programme has grown in success and developed a loyal customer base of schools. However, the pricing structure has remained constant for seven years. Figure 6 illustrates the costs of similar programmes run at other London-based Environmental Education Centres.

Provider	Pricing structure	Other notes
Lee Valley Regional Park	£4.90 per child (2 hr) £7.60 per child (4 hr)	Minimum class – 20 children
Isis Education - Hyde Park	£99 (2 hr) £186 (4 hr)	Maximum class – 30 children. Up to 2 classes at one time
Welsh Harp Education Centre	£4 per child (2 hr) £6 per child (up to 4 hr)	
WWT London Wetland Centre	£6.30 per child (1 hr) £7.10 per child (2 hr)	Includes admission prices
Epping Forest Field Studies Centre	(KS1) £195 (per day) (KS2) £215 (per day)	Maximum group – 30 children
Suntrap Forest Education Centre - Epping	In borough schools £205 (2.5 hr) Out of borough schools £213 (2.5 hr) In borough schools £386 (5 hr) Out of borough schools £401 (5 hr)	Maximum group – 30 children KS1, 2, 3 and 4.

Figure 6: Prices at similar providers as of 2nd September 2014.

12. Hampstead Heath is the only open space which charges for formal school sessions. Epping Forest operates a 'suggested donation' model with a base donation of £4 per child per session.
13. It is suggested that the Hampstead Heath Education Services adopts the following 'per session' pricing structure for the next three years. Based on the number of students in 2013, this pricing structure would have brought in approximately £22,000 (almost £7,000 more than our actual 2013 income).

Proposals

14. The proposed pricing structure in Figure 7 moves away from the 'per student' pricing structure, and to a 'per session' structure. This new pricing structure will allow the Education and Play Teams to cover the costs of teaching sessions, regardless of the size of the group. The incremental prices given for classes over 30 students cover the costs of additional teachers to maintain the staff to child ratio.
15. The new pricing structure of a flat rate per session will also decrease the administration burden of the Schools Programme, by making the invoicing process more streamlined.

	State schools (all)	Independent schools
Standard 2 hour session	<p>Minimum price: £90 per 2 hour session (max 30 children).</p> <p>Incremental prices above 30 children: £45 fixed price for up to 15 additional students.</p>	<p>Minimum price: £120 per 2 hour session (max 30 children).</p> <p>Incremental prices above 30 children: £60 fixed price for up to 15 additional students.</p>
Full-day Play and Education session (only at Adventure Playground)	<p>Minimum price: £120 per session (max 30 children).</p> <p>Incremental prices above 30 children: £60 fixed price for up to 15 additional students.</p>	<p>Minimum price: £150 per session (max 30 children).</p> <p>Incremental prices above 30 children: £75 fixed price for up to 15 additional students.</p>
Organised Play session (only at Adventure Playground)	<p>Minimum price: £60 per session (max 30 children).</p> <p>Incremental prices above 30 children: £30 fixed price for up to 15 additional students.</p>	<p>Minimum price: £60 per session (max 30 children).</p> <p>Incremental prices above 30 children: £30 fixed price for up to 15 additional students.</p>

Figure 7: Proposed pricing structure for September 2014

16. Changing the pricing structure may result in a decrease in the number of schools over the short term as they adjust to a higher rate. Evaluations suggest that our customers think we are currently exceptional value, with 100% of evaluations rating us 'high value for money'. As a result, we predict any drop in customer numbers would be limited, and only expected to last for the first year of the new system.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

17. This proposal is aimed at achieving the Departmental Business Plan strategic objective of *'Improving our use of resources through increased income generation and improved procurement'*.

Implications

18. While the main risk of this proposal is a brief reduction in the number of schools attending sessions, the overall implications will result in more income generation for both the Education and Play Teams.

Conclusion

19. Education continues to be a main priority for Hampstead Heath and the Open Spaces Department as a whole. However, the cost of Schools Programmes must be covered by the pricing structure, in order to maintain a successful and financially sustainable service. Consequently, we propose changing the charging structure to a 'per session' basis to cover our costs more adequately.

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