



Middlesex Learning Trust

Charging and Remissions Policy

Approved by Trustees on 22 June 2021

This policy should be read alongside the following policies:

- Financial Leadership
- Fraud
- Gifts and Hospitality
- Register of Business Interests
- Reimbursement of Expenses
- Whistleblowing.

1. Introduction

Under the Education Reform Act 1988 every academy trust, through its Board of Trustees must have a policy on charging for school activities.

- 1.1 Unless an academy trust has such a policy, the academy trust is acting illegally if it makes a charge, even if such a charge would be legal under the legislation.
- 1.2 As part of the Trustees policy for charging, it must decide what their policy on remission for “students” who might be disadvantaged owing to their family financial circumstances” will be.
- 1.3 When agreed, support should be made known to parents, (through the trip letter sent home to parents –see paragraph below).

2. Scope of The Policy

- 2.1 The basic philosophy of this policy is that there should be no charge for any form of education or related activity if it takes place during school hours. There are a few exceptions.
- 2.2 **For school visits during normal school hours** no actual charge will be made for travel and tuition, but the Trustees will ask parents for a voluntary contribution (*i.e. students not providing a voluntary contribution will not be prevented from attending the trip*) The wording that is used on all our letters is as follows:

“We are asking for a voluntary contribution of £ per student to cover the full cost of the trip. If there are any problems with paying would you please contact me as soon as possible.”

“I must point out that if there are insufficient funds received from parents the trip will not take place. I would therefore be grateful if you could return the reply slip below immediately so that we can determine whether there are sufficient funds available to allow the trip to proceed.”

Money collected in this way (as voluntary contributions) can be used to subsidise the trip for other students as these are voluntary contributions.

At the end of the trip any surplus monies must be used for or returned to the students.

- 2.3 For **journeys out of school hours**, travel and tuition fees will not be charged if the activity is related to the National Curriculum or forms part of the syllabus of a prescribed examination. However, voluntary contributions will be sought (see above).

A charge will be made for other trips providing “Optional Extras” out of school hours where parental agreement to these charges has been sought. This can include travel costs, board and lodgings, books and materials and staff costs, for example a ski trip. No profit will be made from these trips and no student should subsidise any other student or person concerned. The school may be able to provide support for necessitous students wishing to go on these trips in consultation with the Headteacher.

- 2.4 **Board and lodging costs** for all residential trips, both in and out of school time, can be charged for (though the points raised above in point 2.2 still apply).

- 2.5 The Trustees will charge for **instrumental music tuition**, (a subsidy is available for students whose parents are in receipt of Income Support through the Music Service).

- 2.6 **Physical education activities that are off site** are paid for through voluntary contributions (as in point 2.2. above) but parental permission must be given before such tuition can begin.

- 2.7 **The Trustees will charge for costs incurred through wilful damage or negligence to academy trust property**, including that of staff and students. This may cover the whole cost or part thereof and each case is decided separately in consultation with the Headteacher. Details of damage done and a bill for repairs will be sent to parents.

- 2.8 The Trustees will normally pay for **entrance to public exams**, though they may make a charge for entrance fees to public exams which are not “prescribed” or for which the student has not been prepared by the school. The Trustees will also charge parents for entrance fees to public exams for which students have been entered but which they fail to attend or for which they fail to submit coursework unless there is a valid reason, i.e. medical.

- 2.9 Students will not be charged for **books, instruments and equipment**. However, aprons, sports clothing and football boots are not considered as equipment and are included in the uniform and equipment list. **Books, instruments and equipment** that are loaned to students and not returned will be charged for.

- 2.10 In **practical subjects**, students will only be charged for **ingredients or materials** if there is a finished product and the parents have indicated in advance that they wish

to own the finished product. It will be made clear in school literature that students will take home all products made in practical subjects and left to parents to notify the school if they do not wish this to happen.

- 2.11 For concerts and performances, tickets will be available to purchase to attend these functions at a cost that reflects the expenditure incurred as a result of putting on such a concert or performance. All monies received will be allocated to either the concert or performance budgets and in the case of any surplus funds received these will be put towards the continuance of staging these specific activities, eg the purchase of musical instruments, scripts, costumes.

3. Remission of Charges (from unofficial funds)

- 3.1 Remission of charges is at the Headteacher's discretion.

4. Extended Services

- 4.1 No charge is made for the provision of Extended Services, i.e. IT classes for the community, arranged as a result of successful bids
- 4.2 In the absence of funding, the school will make a charge to meet operational costs
- 4.3 An 'at cost' charge will be made for resources provided, e.g. handbooks
- 4.4 Reclaims for VAT for expenditure on community activities/facilities will only be made where General Annual Grant (GAG) funds are used
- 4.5 Requests for charges to parents will indicate whether these are administered by the school or a third party
- 4.6 Charges will not be made for study support activities if these activities relate directly to a child's attainment or preparation for a public examination

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

As with all academy trust policies appropriate procedures are put in place to implement the policy including:

- Training Staff
- Informing students
- Clarity about specific roles and responsibilities and expectations
- Clearly defined procedures in place for staff and students to follow

There is a regular review of the policy and procedures to ensure they are up to date and fit for purpose. This takes place at least annually and also when new information becomes available. The policy and procedures will then be updated appropriately.