



MOSAIC
LEARNING TRUST
Raising Aspirations,
Empowering Futures

CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY

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1. Statement of Intent

1.1. Mosaic Learning Trust is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all students, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established the following policy and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

1.2. The aims of this policy are to:

- Have robust, clear processes in place for charging and remissions
- Clearly set out the types of activity that can be charged for and when charges will be made

2. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

2.1. This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on charging for school activities and the Education Act 1996, sections 449 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for school activities in England. Academies are required to comply with this Act through their funding agreements.

2.2. The policy is also based on guidance from the DfE on statutory policies for schools and academy trusts.

2.3. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

Charge:	a fee payable for specifically defined activities
Remission:	the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable
Optional Extras:	charges may be made for some additional activities that are known as 'optional extras'

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1. The Trustee Board

The Trustee Board has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy and for monitoring the implementation of this policy. Responsibility for approving and monitoring the charging and remissions policy has been delegated to the Asset Board.

4.2. Headteachers

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the charging and remissions policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3. Staff

Staff are responsible for:

Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently

Notifying the Headteacher of any specific circumstances that they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies

The school will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4. Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to notify staff or the Headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where Charges Cannot Be Made

5.2. Education:

We will **not** charge parents/carers for:

- Admission applications.

- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment) as part of the curriculum.
- Education provided outside school hours if it is:
 - Part of the national curriculum
 - Part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for by the school
 - Part of religious education
 - Instrumental or vocal tuition, **unless provided at the request of the student's parents/carers.**
 - Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the student has been prepared for it at the school.
 - Examination re-sits, if the student is being prepared for the re-sits at the school.

5.3. Transport:

We will **not** charge for:

1. Transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where there is a statutory obligation to provide the transport.
2. Transporting registered students to other premises where the school or LA has arranged for students to be educated.
3. Transporting students to meet an examination requirement when they have been prepared for the examination at the school.
4. Transport provided for an educational visit.

5.4. Residential Visits:

1. Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
2. Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of:
 - The National Curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
3. Supply teachers, covering for teachers who are absent from school, accompanying students on a residential visit

6. Where Charges Can Be Made

6.1. Education:

We **may** charge parents/carers for the following optional extras:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wish their child to own them
- Music and vocational tuition (if the tuition is provided at the parent/carer's request)
- Education provided outside of school time that is **not** part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school
 - Religious education
 - Examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school
 - Certain Early Years provision
 - Use of community facilities and other commercial activities

6.2. Transport:

We **may** charge parents for the following optional extras:

- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the student to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing board has arranged for the student to be provided with education)

7. Optional Extras

7.1. We are able to charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, schools can charge for providing materials, books, instruments or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Board and lodging for a student on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to students (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs and supervised homework sessions).
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information / SAR requests.

7.2. When calculating the cost of optional extras, the school will only take into account the following:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in relation to the optional extra
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- The employment of non-teaching staff
- The cost of teaching staff (including teaching assistants) under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra. This also covers supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra.
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide vocal tuition or tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra
- A small administrative fee may be charged to parents/carers

7.3. The school will not charge in excess of the actual cost of providing the optional extra divided by the number of participating students. We will not charge a subsidy for any students wishing to participate but whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. If a proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, we will not charge for the cost of alternative provision for those not participating.

7.4. Participation in any optional activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Therefore, parental agreement is a necessary for the provision of an optional extra.

8. Examination Fees

8.1. We **may** charge for examination fees if:

- The examination is on the prescribed list (which includes SATs, GCSEs and A levels), but the student was not prepared for it at the school.
- The examination is not on the prescribed list, but the school arranged for the student to take it.
- A student fails, without good reason, to complete the requirements of any public examination where the school originally paid or agreed to pay the fee.

9. Examination Re-Sits

9.1. Where a student is entered for a second or subsequent attempt at an examination, we will pay the fee. Once students have left the school, re-sits must be taken at the school.

9.2. If a student or their parents consider it to be in the best interests of the student to request that an examination is re-marked, any fees involved must be covered by the student or their parents. If the awarding body changes the overall grade of the result, the school will not be charged by the awarding body and the parent/student will have their fees refunded.

10. Voluntary Contributions

10.1. We may ask for voluntary contributions towards the cost of school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, we will make this clear to parents/carers at the outset.

10.2. We will also make it clear that there is no obligation for parents/carers to contribute and notify parents/carers whether assistance is available. Some activities for which the school may ask parent/carers for voluntary contributions include:

- Transport to swimming lessons
- Transport on educational visits
- Admission charges for educational visits
- Charges for externally provided workshops

10.3. Parents/carers will be notified well in advance of the cost of any activity and the voluntary contribution requested. We will strive to ensure that parents/carers do not feel pressurised into making voluntary contributions and no child will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents/carers are unwilling or unable to pay. However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity may have to be cancelled.

11. Extended Day Services

11.1. Schools may offer 'extended day' services in the form of 'before and after' school childcare provision, extended nursery provision and lunchtime childcare, and holiday activities. These services will be charged for. Parents/carers may be able to use workplace childcare vouchers as full or part payment for these services.

11.2. Please see each school's website for details of extended day services at Mosaic Learning Trusts Schools.

12. Activities We Charge For

12.1. The school will charge for the following activities:

- Breakfast club (childcare vouchers are an accepted means of payment for this activity), refunds will only be provided for sessions cancelled by the parent/carer if two school days' notice or more of the cancellation has been provided by the parent/carer
- After-school club (childcare vouchers are an accepted means of payment for this activity), refunds will only be provided for sessions cancelled by the parent/carer if two school days' notice or more of the cancellation has been provided by the parent/carer
- Additional pre-school sessions not covered by the free government childcare scheme (childcare vouchers are an accepted means of payment for this activity).
- Student lunches (unless entitled to a free school meal)
- Library book replacements

12.2. School Nursery charges are permitted for the following circumstance:

- Children attending the school nursery who are not yet eligible for their free hours.
- Children attending the school nursery, who do in excess of their free hour allocation

Information regarding free childcare entitlements can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/childcare-calculator>

13. Music Tuition

13.1. Music tuition is the only exception to the rule that all education provided during school hours must be free. The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007 allow for charges to be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of any size – provided that the tuition is at the request of the student's parent/carer.

13.2. The school cannot charge if:

- The teaching is part of the national curriculum; where the tuition is part of the syllabus for a public examination for which the student is being prepared for by the school.
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- If a student is looked after by a local authority

13.3. The charges will not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff providing the tuition.

14. Residential Visits

15.1. We will not charge for:

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours.
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.
- Supply teachers to cover for teachers accompanying students on visits.

15.2. We may charge for board and lodging – but the charge will not exceed the actual cost.

15.3. Parents/carers will be exempt from board and lodging costs if they can prove that they are in receipt of one or more of the qualifying benefits. The list of benefits to which this applies can be found here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5af99c8ae5274a25e78bbe30/Charging_for_school_activities.pdf

16. Damaged Or Lost Items

The school may charge for the cost of replacing items that are damaged or lost due to the negligence or poor behaviour of students or their parents.

17. Remissions

17.2. There is limited funding available to enable families in financial difficulty to send their children on visits/activities. And there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a need's basis, and if the full cost of the trip/activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip/activity will be cancelled.

17.3. Parents/carers in receipt of one or more of the qualifying benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities. The list of benefits to which this applies can be found here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5af99c8ae5274a25e78bbe30/Charging_for_school_activities.pdf

17.4. Parents/carers of students eligible for student premium funding, or those experiencing financial hardship may be eligible for a longer period of instalments to enable their child to access the activity.

17.5. Where parents have financial difficulties (but are not in receipt of the qualifying benefits outlined above), we recommend that an appointment is made with the Headteacher to discuss the matter further. All cases will be dealt with in complete confidence.

18. School Trip Refunds

18.1. All deposits for school trips will be non-refundable. Parents will be informed of this when they are provided with initial information about the trip.

- 18.2. In the event that the school has to cancel a trip due to foreseen circumstances, parental contributions will be refunded. In the event that a school trip is cancelled by a party other than the school due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents.
- 18.3. In the event that a student or their parents cancel the student's place on a trip, it is at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account the reason for cancellation, whether the school will be reimbursed for the student's place on the trip, and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another student.
- 18.4. Where a student or their parents have previously cancelled a place on a trip and received a full refund, the school has the right to refuse to allow the student to attend future trips and visits.
- 18.5. In the event that a student cannot attend a trip at the last minute, e.g. due to illness, it is at the school's discretion as to whether a refund is given. The school will take into account whether the school will be reimbursed for the student's place on the trip and whether the place on the trip can be offered to another student.
- 18.6. In the event that a school trip is postponed due to unforeseen circumstances, it is at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.
- 18.7. In the event that the decision is made to postpone a trip due to foreseen circumstances, it is at the school's discretion as to what happens with the parental contributions for the trip. The school will consider its options, which could include carrying forward the money until the trip takes place, transferring the money to another trip, or refunding parents.
- 18.8. Where the payment schedule is not adhered to, the school reserves the right to withdraw any student from an educational visit, unless exceptional circumstances have been communicated to us. Please discuss in confidence with the school if you are having difficulty meeting the schedule.
- 18.9. Any place offered on an educational visit is conditional and may subsequently be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team of the school. The school reserves the right to withdraw any student from an educational visit if the student repeatedly displays poor standards of behaviour in school and/or it is considered that their behaviour would pose a serious health and safety risk to themselves or others participating in the educational visit. In such a circumstance the school will not refund any payments to parent/carers already made to the tour operators or any external suppliers.
- 18.10. The school will deal with cancellations and refunds on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that all students and their families are treated equally.
- 18.11. If a parent wishes to make a complaint about refunds, they can do so via the compliments and complaints procedure.

19. Debt Recovery

- 19.1. The board of trustees delegate the following powers to the Headteacher of each school in relation to the recovery of bad debts:
- The Headteacher shall have the discretion to write off individual bad debts up to a limit of £10.00.
 - The school will take legal advice to reclaim debts above this value.

- 19.2. The school has the right to commence debt recovery procedures for any outstanding debt due to the school, which may result in interest, plus additional charges for administration / legal costs being added to the debt and possibly a court summons.
- 19.3. The school may use its discretion to forbid any student with outstanding debt attending extracurricular / optional extra school trips until the debt is cleared.
- 19.4. Please discuss in confidence with the school if you are having difficulty repaying any debts.
- 19.5. A record of all bad debts and the action taken to resolve the issue must be retained for finance and audit purposes in accordance with the Financial Management Policy. The Chief Financial Officer must be notified of all bad debts arising above £10.00 (see Scheme of Financial Delegation).

20. Setting Charges and Remissions

- 20.1. Charges and remissions are set in accordance with the legislation and statutory guidance set out above.
- 20.2. For regular activities, the charges and remissions for each activity will be determined by the Headteacher of each school in consultation with the CFO and reviewed in the summer term each year as part of budget planning and setting. Parents will be informed of the charges for the coming year in the relevant documentation.
- 20.3. For other activities, charges and remissions will be determined by the Headteacher in consultation with the CFO as appropriate and notified to parents/carers as and when they arise (e.g. school trips).

21. Monitoring and Review

- 21.1. The Headteacher of each school monitors their charges and remissions and ensures these comply with this policy. If there are any changes these will be notified to the CFO.
- 21.2. This policy will be reviewed by the CFO and CEO every 3 years or whenever legislation changes.
- 21.3. At every review, the policy will be approved by the CEO for implementation across the Trust.