Matthew Arnold Primary School

Charging & Remissions Policy

CHARGING & REMISSIONS POLICY

School *Matthew Arnold Primary School* **Date** *March 2026*

This Charging & Remissions Policy is guided by DfE document '*Charging for school activities 2018*'[1].

No charges will be made for activities that are not included in the charging and remissions policy. The policy defines each type of activity that will be charged for and when charges apply.

The school cannot charge for education during school hours, including any materials, books, instruments or other equipment, subject to the exceptions referred to in this policy.

If a charge is to be made for a particular type of activity, for example optional extras, parents will be advised of how the charge has been calculated, who may benefit from school subsidy (remissions) and how to apply.

The school will inform parents/carers on low incomes and in receipt of benefits of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of activities.

This policy sets out circumstances in which the school proposes to remit or subsidise (wholly or in part) any charge which would otherwise be payable to them in accordance with the policy.

Education

The school **cannot** charge for:

- Admission applications to any state funded school
- Education provided during school hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments or other equipment)
- Education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum[1], or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent
- Entry for a prescribed public examination, if the pupil has been prepared for it at the school
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school[2]

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[1] *It should be noted that 'part of the national curriculum' is not restricted to learning outside the classroom experiences that are specifically subject based (e.g. geography or science fieldwork) and include, for example, activities designed to fulfil requirements under the national curriculum 'inclusion statement' (e.g. developing teamwork skills).*

[2] *If a pupil fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus, the fee can be recovered from the pupil's parents.*

The school **can** charge for:

- School meals (except for those entitled to free school meals)
- Materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where parents' wish to own them
- Provision of materials/ingredients for subjects such as Art & Design or Food Technology where pupils take home the finished product
- Optional extras
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances
- Certain early years provision *[Education Regulations 2012]*
- Community facilities *[s.27(1) Education Act 1996]*

School Meals

Payment for school meals (dinner money) must be made by parents/carers weekly in advance. This would normally be the Monday of the week ahead for which the meals are being provided.

Children will not be provided with a school meal unless it is paid for, except for those pupils that are entitled to free school meals or infant free school meals. If parents believe that their child may qualify for free school meals, they are advised to contact the school office or an LCC 'One Stop Shop'.

Pupils who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged a set amount of **£2.00 per day** decided by the Governing Body in accordance with *LCCs Charging & Remissions Policy*. (***Appendix 6***, *LCC's Financial Regulations & Procedures).*

Access to free school meals is a statutory (legal) entitlement and it is important that parents register for free school meals if they are eligible, to enable the school to secure funding for Universal Infants Free School Meals and Pupil Premium.

Arrears of dinner money from the sale of school meals will be pursued by the school on a weekly basis in accordance with *LCCs Debt Management/Recovery Policy. (**Appendix 10**, LCC's Financial Regulations & Procedures).*

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment.

The HT will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities, and the levels of charge will be set annually by the HT on the recommendations of the finance committee. The charges, when determined, will be published on the school's website and appended to this policy. Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
  - part of the national curriculum
  - part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school
  - part of religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school

- Extended day services offered to pupils. Charges will cover the costs of teaching/non-teaching staff engaged to provide the activity or brought in to run the club
  - breakfast club
  - after-school clubs
  - lunch club (not included in 15 hr free entitlement)
  - childcare
  - supervised homework sessions
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing body have arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Visits to school by professionals e.g. theatre groups, dancers, musicians, artists etc.
- *Note: If school charges for any other activities that take place outside of school hours, they should be listed here …*

In calculating the cost of optional extras an amount may be included in relation to:

- Materials, books, instruments, or equipment provided in connection with optional extra
- The cost of buildings, insurance and accommodation
- Non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra
- The cost, or an appropriate proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, or vocal tuition, where the tuition is an optional extra

Any charge made in respect of an individual pupil will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It cannot include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate.

No charge will be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school, accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges apply.

School may decide to provide for example, an Italian language evening class as an optional extra. However, the GB may decide to reduce the cost for those children who are eligible for free school meals.

Voluntary Contributions

Nothing in legislation prevents a school from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the school will make this clear to parents at the outset. The school must make it clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any voluntary contribution.

No child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund the activity/visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled and all monies paid will be returned to parents/carers.

School will make this clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the activity/visit. The school will make it clear to parents at the outset what their policy for allocating places on school visits will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents will not be pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. The school will not send colour coded letters, reminders to make payments, direct debit or standing order mandates to parents.

Music Tuition

Although government legislation states that, in general, all education provided during school hours must be free, instrumental and vocal music tuition is an exception to that rule. All children study music as part of the normal school curriculum. This is non-chargeable.
However, charges may be made for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually, or to groups of any size, provided that the tuition is delivered by specialist tutors and provided at the request of the pupil's parent. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument.

Charges may not exceed cost of the provision, including cost of staff who provide the tuition.

Charges will not apply if teaching is either an essential part of the national curriculum, or is provided under the first access to the key stage 2 Instrumental and Vocal Tuition Programme. No charge will be made in respect of a pupil who is looked after by the LA *[s.22 (1) of the Children Act 1989].*

Early Years Provision

Currently we offer fee paying and funded places for 2 year olds. Financial support for 2 year olds has been introduced and we can offer support. However, you must met a given criteria to qualify for a funded place. Please contact the school office for further details.

There will be a charge for non-funded 2 year old places. There is a charge per 3 hour session with the costs being invoiced weekly.

From January 2026, we will be introducing a limited number of 30 hour sessions for 2 and 3 year olds. Please contact the school office for further details.

Additional chargeable hours for these sessions are available with costs being invoiced weekly if applicable.

Transport

The School cannot charge for:

- Transporting registered pupils to or from the school premises, where the LA has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils to other premises where the governing body or LA has arranged for pupils to be educated
- Transport that enables a pupil to meet an examination requirement when he has been prepared for that examination at the school
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

Residential Visits

Schools cannot charge for:

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours *[s.452 Education Act 1996]*
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential visit.

Schools can charge for:

- Board and lodgings and the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

When a school informs parents/carers about forthcoming visits, they should make it clear that parents/carers of children entitled to free school meals, will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging.

Education Partly During School Hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might

require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Non-residential activities

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require pupils to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Residential visits

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day. Examples:

- Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm in Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.
- Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

Damage to Property & Breakages

Where school property has been wilfully or recklessly lost/damaged by a student/parent/carer/3rd party, the school may charge those responsible for some or all of the cost of the repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a 3rd party has been damaged by a pupil and the school has been charged, the school may charge some or all of the cost to those responsible. Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the HT and dependant on the situation.

Uniform

Pupils' cardigans/sweatshirts/ties/coats are available for sale from the school office at cost price. Adult sizes reflect VAT. School does not accept responsibility for lost or damaged articles of clothing or any personal possessions.

Swimming

The school organises swimming lessons for children. These take place in school time and, although some lessons may exceed the National Curriculum requirement, the school does not levy a charge to parents/carers.

Remissions Policy

Where the parents of a child are unable to meet any one of the charges the school may make, they can apply in writing and complete confidence, to the HT for the remission of charges in part or full. The HT in consultation with the finance committee will make any authorisation of the remission of charges.
Pupils whose parents/carers are in receipt of relevant government support payments may, in addition to having a free school lunch entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of charges for board and lodging costs during residential school visits/trips.

- Income Support (IS)
- Income based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- Support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of the State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, providing that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by HMRC) does not exceed the limit for that tax year
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced in October 2008

The identity of the child or parents/carers of the child who did not want to make the payment/charge, or could not make the payment/charge, will not be disclosed.

Review and Approval

This policy will be formally approved and minuted by the Full Governing Body on an annual basis and be made available on the school's website.

Date last reviewed: *March 2025*

Signed by Chair of Governors ……..

Signed by Head Teacher ……

Next review date due: *March 2027*

Summary

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Any charge made in respect of an individual pupil will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It cannot include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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