Mapledown School

Working & Learning Together to Achieve our Best

Charges and Remission Policy

Name of School	Mapledown School
This policy was updated on	10th November 2020
The policy was reviewed in	September 2021 September 2022 September 2023 October 2024 September 2025 August 2026
The policy is to be reviewed annually in	September 2027

Date policy last reviewed: 21st August 2026

Signed by:

_____ Headteacher Date: _____

_____ Chair of governors Date: _____

1. General Principles

The School Governing Body is committed to the general principle of free education. In determining the charging and remissions policies which are set out in this document the Governors have been mindful of the policy statement produced by the Department for Education

The Governing Body recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities, including school visits, residential experiences and clubs, can make towards all aspects of pupils' education. The Governing Body would accordingly wish to promote and provide as far as possible such activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the benefit of pupils of the school.

Under the charging provisions set out in legislation, governing bodies and local authorities of state funded schools may choose to charge for certain defined activities, but only if they have first drawn up charging and remissions policies. These policies should be made available to parents on request.

2. Aims

School aims 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 and will not be made
- Provide the opportunity for all students to benefit from school activities and visits, independent of their parents'/carers' financial means. This policy describes how we will do our best to ensure a good range of visits and activities is offered and, at the same time, will try to minimise the financial barriers that may prevent some students from taking full advantage of these opportunities.

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2025, updated 2026) 'Maintained schools governance guide'
- DfE (2024) 'What maintained schools must or should publish online'
- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'

4. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions will be used:

- Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1. The Governing Body

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the Head Teacher. The Governing Body also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

5.2. The Head Teacher

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

5.3. Staff Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the Head Teacher of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies.

6. Charges

6.1 Where charges cannot be made

Below we set out what we **cannot** charge for:

6.1.1 Education

- an admission application to the 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/school curriculum
- instrumental or vocal tuition, for students learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parent /carer

6.1.2 Transport •

- Transporting registered students to or from the school premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered students to other premises where the governing body or local authority has arranged for students to be educated
- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

6.1.3 Residential visits

- 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/school curriculum

6.2 Where charges can be made

Below we set out what we **can** charge for:

6.2.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment, where the child's parent / carer wishes him or her to own them
- Music and vocal tuition, in certain circumstances
- Optional extras (see 6.2.2 below)
- Community facilities
- Provision of information within the scope of freedom of information

6.2.2 Optional Extras

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:

- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the student to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing body has arranged for the student to be provided with education)
- Extended day services offered to students (such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs and holiday clubs)

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

- Non-teaching staff
- Teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra (including 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 individual students will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other students who wish to take part in the activity but 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 students who do not wish to participate.

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 prerequisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

6.2.3 Damage to/loss of property

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) the charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide. The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

A charge will be levied in respect of wilful damage, neglect or loss of school property (including premises, furniture, equipment, books or materials) belonging to a third party, where the cost has been recharged to the school. The charge to be the cost of replacement or repair, or such lower cost as the Headteacher may decide. The school will consider waiving costs in exceptional circumstances, e.g. financial hardship.

7. Voluntary Contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 6 of this policy, the school may, from time to time, ask for voluntary contributions towards the benefit of the school or school activities. If an activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, the school will make this clear to parents at the outset. The school will make it clear to parents that there will be no obligation for parents to make any contribution. Parents will be notified regarding whether assistance is available.

No student will be excluded from an activity simply because their parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child will still be given an equal opportunity to take part in the activity and the school will set out how places will be allocated from the outset. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund an activity, and the school cannot fund it via another source, the activity will be cancelled and this will be made clear to parents.

The school will strive to ensure that parents do not feel pressured into making voluntary contributions. Measures which may make parents feel pressured, such as colour coded letters will not be sent when the school requests contributions.

Letters to parents/carers announcing arrangements include the following form of words: "In order to cover the costs of this journey/visit, a voluntary contribution of £..... per student is sought. Whereas there is no obligation for parents/carers to contribute and students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents/carers are willing to contribute. This journey/visit will not go ahead if sufficient funds are unavailable."

In summary the Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge for the following activities which may from time to time be organised by the school.

- Day trips off site where admissions charges apply. These charges are **VOLUNTARY** and no parent will be forced to pay and no pupil will be denied access to a school trip if parents feel that they would be unable to make all or part of this charge. In such a situation families/parents should call and speak to the headteacher immediately.
- Residential Activities held during school hours: charges may be made for the board and lodging element of those residential activities which take place during school hours. Parents will be notified in advance of any such activities which the school proposes to organise and the estimated cost. Parental consent will be obtained for their children's participation in any such activities for which a charge may be made. Any charge for a particular activity will be calculated by reference to the actual cost of providing the board and lodging for each pupil; no other costs will be covered by the charge. Any remission arrangements for such activities will be at the discretion of the Governing Body.
- Materials and Ingredients: a charge will only be made for any materials and ingredients relating to activities taking place during school hours where parents have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product e.g. in home economics. Alternatively parents may, in these circumstances, be asked to volunteer to provide the ingredients and materials prior to the activity taking place.

8. Remissions

The school will set aside a fund to enable parents in financial difficulty to send their children on visits and activities. The funding will be limited and there is no guarantee that all requests can be met. Assistance will be allocated on a needs basis, and if the full cost of the trip or activity cannot be met through assistance funding and voluntary contributions, the trip or activity will be cancelled.

Parents in receipt of any of the following benefits may request assistance with the costs of activities:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 • The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided that they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and they have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit – if they apply on or after 1 April 2018, their household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits they receive)

Any other remission arrangements for a particular activity or pupil will be entirely at the discretion of the School Governing Body. Any subsidy provided by the Governing Body will be met from the funds at its disposal.

To request assistance, parents should contact the Headteacher via office@mapledown.barnet.sch.uk