

NMAT CHARGING AND REMISSION POLICY for all Academy activities (Statutory)



1. Preamble and Context

Our Trustees acknowledge the right of all of our students to receive free state funded Academy education and understands that activities offered wholly or mainly during normal learning time must be made available to all students regardless of their parents' ability to help meet the cost.

However, our Trustees also reserve the right to levy specific charges in any circumstances they deem necessary and within the guidelines of the Education Reform Act of 1988. Without such charges being raised, the many and varied activities which NMAT offers its students would be severely limited. Our Trustees believe that such a limitation would be severely detrimental to the broader education of many of our students.

2. What does the Trust's academies raise charges for?

Educational Trips and Visits

The Education Act of 1996 confirmed the right of schools to invite Voluntary Contributions for the benefit of our Academy, or in support of any activity organised by the Academy - whether during or outside the Academy working day.

Educational visits are rarely provided by our Academy at no cost to families. In most cases, a voluntary contribution will be required by the Academy to meet the costs of the educational visit.

The Trust therefore reserves the absolute right to determine the level of all voluntary contributions for all Educational visits. In determining such levels of contribution, we will focus exclusively upon the viability of the trip/visit.

Please see the NMAT Journeys/Visits and Insurance Policy for more details.

Academy Uniform

Please see the relevant Academy's Uniform Policy for more details.

Lost/Damaged/Broken Academy Property

The Trustees reserve the right to ask parents/carers to meet the full cost, or a proportion of the cost, for any Lost / Damaged / Broken Academy property – except when caused by fair wear and tear.

In ALL cases of wilful Loss/Damage/Breakage, parents/carers will be asked to meet the full cost(s) of repair or replacement.

Individual Tuition

Trustees reserve the right to ask parents/carers to meet any costs associated with individual tuition in the playing of musical instruments whether in or out of Academy hours (UNLESS it is provided as part of a specification for a prescribed public examination or is required by the National Curriculum).

Trustees also reserve the right to ask parents/carers to meet any costs associated with 'optional extras' provided by the Academy – both within and without the Academy working day. Participation in such optional extras is always entirely voluntary.

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Finished Products/Charging in Kind

Where parents/carers have expressed a wish in advance to have a finished product made at Academy (e.g. in D&T, Art etc) a charge will be made at cost price. Parents/carers will know the charge for such products in advance.

'Vulnerable Students' will be able to access PPG funding for specific costs for projects within certain subjects e.g. D&T. These costs will have been agreed between departments and the relevant Senior Leader and parents/carers notified in advance when charging letters are issued.

Public Examinations – including 're-sits'

Trustees will routinely expect the Academy to meet all the costs of all initial public examinations for all students. The Academy will not, however, meet even those initial costs when students have failed to prepare adequately for the examination. The Academy will, routinely, pay for one examination re-sit unless extenuating circumstances dictate that we fund more. However, for any student who has failed to prepare adequately for any examination, the Academy will not, routinely, fund any re-sits including the first.

Parents/carers will NEVER be charged for examination re-sits where extenuating circumstances exist – e.g. when a student has been ill. Parents/carers should seek advice from the Exams Officer in such circumstances.

Transport

The Trust will not fund transport costs for activities not provided by the Academy, unless by prior agreement of the Trust.

Freedom of Information Requests

Please see our separate Freedom of Information Policy and Schedule

Copies of Student Files

Trustees will routinely levy an administration charge for the preparation of such files for parents. (This charge is reviewed annually as part of the Publication Scheme).

Private Use of Academy Facilities by students

Private use of our Academy's telephone, e-mail and reprographic facilities by our students is routinely not permitted.

In the rare case that a private telephone call is made and is deemed to be an emergency, no charge is made.

3. Which families might be entitled to exemption from such charges?

Students in receipt of Free Academy Meals (FSM)

Students who are Adopted from Care

Students whose parents/carers are Serving in the Armed Forces

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Parents/carers of students who are in receipt of the following support payments will, in addition to having a Free Academy Meals ('FSM') entitlement, also be entitled to the remission of charges:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part V1 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided there is no entitlement to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if applying on or after 1 April 2018 household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits received)

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT IF YOU ARE IN RECEIPT OF WORKING TAX CREDIT ON A REGULAR BASIS YOU WILL NOT QUALIFY FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS

When arranging a chargeable activity such parents/carers will be invited in confidence for the remission of charges in full or in part.

The NMAT Finance Lead will make authorisation for such remission having sought the opinion of the relevant staff.

4. Refunds

If an activity or trip is cancelled by the Academy, a full refund will be applicable. Where such events are forcibly cancelled by the Trust but through no fault of the Academy (e.g. staff industrial action, unusual weather etc.) refunds will **not** be applicable.

If a student withdraws from an activity or trip, a refund will only be paid if the place can be filled by another student or if the Academy is refunded for paid transport, accommodation and entrance fees. Such refund will be subject to an administration charge of £5 as with the dispensing of surpluses (see the Academy's Journey/Visit and Insurance Policy).

Where applicable, individual trip letters will give details of any 'cut-off' dates for non-refundable elements of activity or trip costs.

5. Equal Opportunities

The Executive Principal will ensure that the Academy's equal opportunities policies are observed in implementing the policy.

6. Responsibilities

Trustees are responsible for making and reviewing the policy in line with our Policy Review Schedule.

The NMAT Finance Lead is responsible for the implementation of the policy and ensuring that staff, parents/carers and students know the details as appropriate, in conjunction with the Academy's Local Governing Body.

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Other staff may be responsible for implementing the policy as part of their overall responsibilities (e.g. the Educational Visits Coordinator).

7. Monitoring and Review

The NMAT Finance Lead will report on the policy to the Executive Principal as appropriate.

The Executive Principal and/or NMAT Finance Lead will report to the Trust Board on any relevant aspects of the working of the policy as appropriate.

This policy is written in conjunction with the ['Charging for School Activities'](#) advice from the DFE (May 2018)