



# **CHARGING AND REMISSIONS POLICY**

## **MIDDLEWICH HIGH SCHOOL**

Updated March 2021

<b>Document Control Information</b>	
Document ID	MHSCHARGE001
Document title	MHS Charging & Remissions Policy
Version	1.1
Status	APPROVED
Author	Debbie Carter
Publication date	September 2015
Next review date	Every 12 months

<b>Version History</b>			
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Author</b>
1.0	September 2015	Initial	Debbie Carter (DCA)
1.1	March 2021	Updated	Debbie Carter (DCA)

<b>Approvals</b>	
<b>Approver</b>	<b>Date</b>
Governing Board	September 2015
Resources Committee	March 2021

Middlewich High School is required to comply with the law on charging for school activities. Sections 449 - 462 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities. The DfE document 'Charging for School Activities – May 2018' provides at a glance information and complements the information given in section 7.5 of the DfE's Governance Handbook. The content of this policy takes account of this guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities>

The Governing Board confirm their belief that this policy is in line with legislation. It also recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities including school visits, afterschool clubs and residential experiences can make towards a students' personal and social education.

The Governing Board aims to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum and as additional optional activities.

(Throughout this policy, the term "parents" means all those having parental responsibility for a child.)

## **1. General Principle**

The general principle within the Act is that no charge will be made for any books, materials, instruments, equipment or transport provided by the school for use in connection with education, if the education is:

- Within school hours (but excluding the mid-day break).
- Required for the school Curriculum but out of school hours.
- For statutory religious education.
- For a prescribed public examination prepared for by the school.
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for students learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the student's parents.
- Examination re-sit(s) if the student is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the school.

However, there are exceptions where the school can make charges.

## **2. Exceptions**

Charges are permitted under the Act to meet the cost of "Optional Extras". Where an optional extra is provided, a charge can be made for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. Optional extras are:

- Education provided outside of school time that is not:
  - a) part of the national curriculum.
  - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school; or
  - c) part of religious education.
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered student has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the school.
- Transport (other than transport that is required to take the student to school or to other premises where the local authority/governing board have arranged for the student to be provided with education).
- board and lodging for a student on a residential visit.
- extended day services offered to students (for example breakfast club, after-school clubs, tea and supervised homework sessions).

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

- Materials/ingredients required to produce a finished product made in school (e.g., in Art, Design, Food or Technology lessons), where parents have agreed in advance that the finished article should be owned by the parent/carer or the student
- the cost of buildings 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; and
- 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.
- Re-marking an examination paper where the re-mark is requested by the parent or student
- Re-sits of prescribed public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school

In all cases where a permitted charge is made, parents will be told the amount in advance. Charges will not be set with the intention of exceeding the actual cost per student incurred. Any support will be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

### **3. Voluntary Contributions**

The Act permits voluntary contributions to be requested for any specific visit and/or activity either inside or outside of school time. In all cases where voluntary contributions are requested, parents will be told the amount in advance. The level of voluntary contribution requested will not be set with the intention of exceeding the actual cost per student incurred. No individual student will be excluded from a visit or activity if their parent chooses not to pay the voluntary contribution. However, the visit or activity may have to be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received.

### **4. Other Charges**

To actively engage in learning, be ready to learn and be able to learn in many different contexts, it is essential that students have the right basic equipment e.g., pens, pencils, rulers, calculators. Whilst there is no legal or formal requirement for parents to provide these items the school actively encourages parents and students to purchase them. Some optional items of equipment may be offered for sale by the school e.g., calculators, revision guides etc.

The school will seek payment from parents for damage to, or loss of, school property caused wilfully or negligently by their child.

### **5. Refunds**

Refunds of charges or voluntary contributions received will be made in the following circumstances:

- Cancellation of trips or activities due to circumstances beyond the student's control.
- The school deciding that a student should not take part in a trip or activity for whatever reason. Refunds will be reduced by the amount of any non-refundable deposits made.
- If an examination re-mark requested by a parent or student is successful (the reimbursement of fees will be made by the examination board.)

In other circumstances, at the discretion of the Headteacher.

## **6. Support Fund**

Where charges are to be made to parents, or voluntary contributions sought, these will be advised in advance and collected prior to the activity.

Requests for help from parents on eligible benefits will be considered and assistance provided within the limits of any support fund that may be available. Complete confidentiality will be observed in all such matters. Eligible benefits include:

- 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 Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled 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 you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Where a parent does not receive an eligible benefit, the school will nonetheless consider requests for assistance in the phasing of contributions, provided that all such phased contributions have been made by the time the trip or event takes place.

The following options may be available on request (please allow up to 5 working days for a response):

- Agreed payment instalment plans.
- Agreed extension to payment date.
- Requests to reduce the amount payable will be considered on an individual basis.

Parents should contact the School Finance Office in the first instance. Requests will be treated in confidence within the context of liaison between the staff members responsible for each activity. Any subsidy is subject to the discretion of the Headteacher and sufficient funds being available.