Manchester Communication Primary Academy

Manchester Communication Primary Academy

Charging and Remissions Policy

2026

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Revision Information

This document has been approved for operation within	All Trust Establishments
Date of last review	September 2025
Date of next review	September 2026
Review Period	Annually, or where they have been material changes to the relevant courses of business
Date of Trustee Approval	17 September 2025, Board of Trustees
Status	To be approved
Person Responsible for Policy	Chief Financial Officer / Academy Headteachers
Owner	Greater Manchester Academies Trust
Signature of Approval	

Revision History

Review Date	Changes Made	By Whom
September 2025	Updated Equality Statement	SHa
September 2025	Section 4.13 updated in line with Gov.uk	SHa
September 2025	• Risks removed as were out of date • Risks are and will be updated on live document and align to the Trust Risk Management policy and risk register	SHa
September 2025	Section 3.10- line to state warp around care is chargeable	SHa

Equality Statement - Under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), arising from the Equality Act 2010, all schools and academies within Greater Manchester Academies Trust have due regard to the need to:
Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
This duty applies to all aspects of policy development, decision-making, and practice. Schools and academies within the Trust will actively consider equality implications when policies are created, reviewed, and implemented, and will record how due regard has been demonstrated in significant decisions.
The Trust will: Publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the PSED.
Set and publish equality objectives at least every four years, which are specific, measurable, and regularly reviewed. Ensure that policies on areas such as admissions, curriculum, behaviour, staffing, facilities (including single-sex facilities), and governance comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the latest statutory and regulatory guidance.
Review all policies and procedures regularly to ensure continued compliance with education and employment legislation, and to reflect developments in case law and Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) guidance.
Promote an inclusive culture where diversity is valued, equality is actively advanced, and all members of our school communities feel respected and able to achieve their potential

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1. Introduction

This is the Charging and Remissions Policy of Greater Manchester Academies Trust, referred to throughout this Policy as the 'Trust'. The academies in the Trust as at September 2025 are Manchester Communication Academy and Manchester Communication Primary Academy.

The Trust is committed to providing a high quality of education and experience, whilst ensuring that finance is never a barrier to pupils' success. This Policy seeks to set out what the academies can charge for, what it can ask for donations for, and what it must provide for free.

Throughout the Policy, we apply the following definitions:

- **Charge** - a fee payable for specifically defined activities
- **Remission** – the full or partial cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable.

1. Aims and objectives

The **principal objective** of the Policy is to protect our learners, our staff, trustees and governors, and our assets.

The Policy has other objectives as follows:

- To ensure the Trust is fully compliant with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook
- To articulate the processes and procedures with regards to charging and remissions
- To ensure that parents, guardians and carers are fully aware of support available to them when contributions are being asked for.

2. Charging and Remissions

As at September 2025, this section of the Policy relates to Manchester Communication Academy (MCA) and Manchester Communication Primary Academy (MCPA).

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The Academy Local Governing Bodies (LGB)

Each academy has its own LGB, which has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this Policy at academy level.

The Headteachers

The Headteacher of each academy is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the Charging and Remissions Policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

Staff

The Trust's staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the Headteacher of their academy of any specific circumstances that they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies.

The Trust and academy senior leadership teams will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation, where applicable.

Parents, Guardians and Carers

Parents, guardians and carers are expected to notify staff or the Headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the Charging and Remissions Policy.

2.2 Admissions

There is no charge for admissions to the academies.

2.3 School meals

There is no charge for children who are entitled to free school meals or infant free school meals. Pupils or students who are not entitled to free school meals will be charged at the advertised amount. This will be paid in advance of taking the meals, via an electronic/online system.

2.4 Public examinations

There is no charge for examinations that are part of the curriculum and on the set examinations list, where children have been prepared for the examinations by the academies.

2.5 Activities taking place during school hours

(This section does not include the break in the middle of the school day).

There is no charge for activities during school hours except for music tuition (See Section 3.9). There is usually no charge for transport during school hours to school-organised activities.

The academies may charge for:

- Materials, books, instruments or equipment that the parent wishes their child to keep or own (the cost will be made clear to the parents before charge)
- Optional extras (see Section 3.6)
- Music or vocal tuition (see Section 3.9)
- Transport for some special trips, activities or excursions taking place during the day.

There may exist some trips, activities or excursions taking place during the day, where a contribution is asked for. These will be determined by the Academy Headteacher and communicated well in advance. Any remissions which may apply will be as per Section 3.13.

2.6 Activities taking place outside of school hours (non-residential)

There is no charge for activities that take place outside of school hours when they are:

- Part of the set curriculum, including sports matches against other schools, colleges or academies
- Part of the syllabus for a public examination that the pupil is being prepared for by the academies
- Part of the academies' basic curriculum for religious education.

Optional extras

The academies may charge for optional extras. 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 pupil or student is being prepared for at the academy
  c) Part of religious education
- Examination entry fee(s) if the registered pupil has not been prepared for the examination(s) at the academies
- Transport that is not taking the pupil to school or to other premises where the local authority or governing body has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education
- Board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils (e.g. breakfast clubs, after school clubs, some holiday provision etc.).

The cost of optional extras

The Academy Headteacher will decide when it is necessary to charge for optional activities, wherever possible they will be subsidised by the school, to reduce the overall cost for pupils, thus enabling access.

Families with more than one child in the same year group will be considered for an appropriate discount (15% each) to support their access to optional extras.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils or students will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating (the academies must not make a 'profit' from these activities). In no circumstances will there be an element of subsidy required by families for any other pupils to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge (see Section 3.13).

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

- Any materials, books, instruments or equipment provided in connection with the optional extra
- 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 a proportion of the costs, for teaching staff employed to provide tuition in playing a musical instrument, where the tuition is an optional extra
- The costs of buildings and accommodation.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be based on parental choice and a willingness to pay the charges. The school will need to have the agreement of parents before organising the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

2.7 Activities taking place partly during school hours (either on or off site)

Where most of a non-residential activity takes place during school hours, the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in Section 3.5.

Travelling time is included in time spent on the activity if the travel itself occurs during school hours.

In cases where most of a non-residential activity takes place outside of school hours the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to participate. Therefore, no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a visit.

In this case, the charging of the activity will be the same as is outlined in Section 3.6.

2.8 Residential activities

The academies 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, 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
- Residential activities that take place during school hours.

The academies may charge for:

Board and lodging

When any visit has been organised by the school where there may be a cost for board and lodging, parents will be informed of this before the visit takes place. The charge will not exceed the actual cost, and wherever financially possible for the school, be subsidised. Parents who can prove they are in receipt of certain benefits may be exempt from paying the full cost (see Section 3.13 for more guidance on remissions).

Travel

Travel charges may apply when the residential activity takes place outside of school hours. The amount charged will be calculated to cover the unit cost per pupil. These charges may not apply to those pupils entitled to remissions, but no other pupils will be charged extra to cover those costs.

Activities

The academies may charge for residential activities that fall outside of school hours (see Section 3.6).

2.9 Music tuition within school hours

We follow government legislation that states that all education provided during school hours must be free; however, music lessons are an exception to this rule.

Charges may be made if the teaching is **not** an essential part of either the National Curriculum or a public examination syllabus being followed by the pupil(s) or student(s).

The academy may charge for teaching requested by parents and delivered by specialist tutors given to either an individual pupil or groups of any appropriate size (provided that the size of the group is based on sound pedagogical principles) to play a musical instrument or to sing. The cost of these lessons may depend on the size and duration of the class as well as the type of instrument.

The academies will not charge if the music tuition is part of the National Curriculum.

The academies are dedicated to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils including access to specialised music tuition, therefore charges made for music tuition within school hours will be remitted for pupils on free school meals.

There is no charge for vocal or instrumental tuition for a pupil or student who is looked after by a local authority. This includes instruments, music books and exam fees.

2.10 Extended services

Extended services are defined as provision which extends the school day, with the aim of providing childcare. This includes breakfast clubs before 8:30 and after school provision outside of the academies' universal ESA

offer which are chargeable. This does not include trips, residential trips etc., which are covered in Section 3.6.

Both MCA and MCPA provide a well-rounded and extensive education for our students which includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities (extended school activities). Extended services enable our academies to provide:

- High-quality learning opportunities either side of the school day
- Ways of intervening early when children are at risk of low outcomes
- Ways of increasing pupil engagement
- Ways of improving outcomes and narrowing gaps in outcomes between different groups of pupils.

2.11 Refunds

Request for refunds for trips will be considered on an individual basis but may be rejected if the academy is unable to recoup the costs incurred. The reason for a child's non-attendance on a trip will not override this.

Parents must be notified that residential trip payments are non-refundable at the point of payment, this is because the payments to providers are non-refundable.

The academies reserve the right not to refund costs where a pupil or student is withdrawn from an activity by an academy because of a pupil's breach of the academies' Behaviour Policies.

2.12 Damage to property and breakages

Where Trust or academy property has been wilfully or recklessly damaged by a pupil, student, parent, guardian or carer, the Trust or the academy may charge those responsible for some or all the cost of repair or replacement.

Where property belonging to a third party has been damaged by a pupil, and the academy has been charged, the academy may charge some or all the cost to those responsible.

Whether or not these charges will be made will be decided by the Academy Headteacher and will be dependent on the situation.

2.13 Remissions and concessions

The academies may consider the remission of charges to parents or carers who receive any of the following support payments:

- 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 an individual is 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 qualification for Working Tax Credit ends)
- Universal Credit (if applying after 1 April 2018, household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits received) Universal Credit.

Children of families who receive these payments are also entitled to free school meals. Parents, guardians or carers who are eligible for the remission of charges will be dealt with confidentially.

The Academy Headteacher will authorise the remission of charges with any precedents documented and retained for future reference.

The academies may choose to subsidise part or all of the payment of some charges for certain activities and pupils, and this will be determined by the Academy Headteacher.

The academies may remit other charges in full or in part to other parents, guardians or carers after considering other specific hardship cases. The Academy Headteacher invites parents, guardians or carers to apply, in the strictest confidence, for the remission of charges in part or in full.

The Academy Headteacher will authorise remission, in consultation with the Chair of the Academy LGB or the Trust's Executive Principal, if it is felt necessary.

2.14 Voluntary contributions

The academies may ask for voluntary contributions to the academy for general funds and/or to fund activities that will enrich the education or wider provision to pupils and students.

This may include fundraising for charities or the school fund.

In any case where an activity cannot be afforded without voluntary funding, this will be made clear to the parents, guardians or carers by the academy. If the activity is cancelled all monies paid will be returned.

There is no obligation for a parent or carer to make any contribution and the academy will in no way pressure parents to contribute.

2.15 Inability or unwillingness to pay

The academy is committed to ensuring fair access and treatment of all pupils, and this means ensuring that no child is excluded from an activity because the parents or carers of that child are unwilling or unable to pay. If there is insufficient funding for an activity, then it may be cancelled.

The identity of the child or parents of the child who did not want to make the payment, or could not make the payment, will not be disclosed under any circumstances.

2.16 Complaints

Any complaints about the implementation of this Policy or any decisions taken in line with the Policy will be considered as per the contents of the Trust's Complaints Policy.

3. Date of next review

The Policy must next be reviewed and signed off by the GMAT Board of Trustees the sooner of September 2026, or when there have been material changes to the relevant courses of business.