

## **Music Partnership North Charging, Remissions and Subsidy Policy**

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**Policy to be reviewed: February 2023**

Music Partnership North is the Music Education Hub for Newcastle and Northumberland. Music Education Hubs are part of a wider network of programmes and projects that ensure all children and young people have access to high-quality musical opportunities.

A key objective of the Music Education Hub grant provided to the councils by the DfE is to help assist in the removal of barriers to learning and making progress for young musicians.

This policy has been created to help parents and carers support their children's engagement and progress in music across a whole range of activities provided by Music Partnership North. (MPN)

### **Weekly Ensemble Membership**

**Newcastle** -All ensembles, bands, choirs and orchestras in Newcastle are currently free of charge to all children and young people that wish to join a music centre or regional group, irrespective of who teaches them and which school or academy they attend. However, some groups are only open to young musicians of a certain standard. Please discuss your child's needs with a member of the Music Service staff prior to registering them.

**Northumberland** – The hub run a number of ensembles which have an annual membership fee. Fees have reduced significantly over the last 10 years in order to try and make these opportunities as accessible as possible. If parents/families have more than one child taking part in these activities (or one child taking part in multiple ensembles) the hub is able to offer discounted places. The level of discount may vary as the fees for each ensemble can be different. Where financial barriers exist, we also encourage families to seek support through [MPNCharity.com](http://MPNCharity.com) If families are experiencing any financial difficulty we advise them to contact us to discuss alternative payment arrangements. All information will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

### **Instrumental and Vocal Lessons**

Please note that this section of the policy is only for tuition provided directly by MPN. Lessons that take place in schools are undertaken via an agreement and charge made with each school based upon their requests for tuition and other music-making activities.

Schools in Newcastle receive an allocation that can be used to support the cost of instrumental and vocal lessons.

Schools in Northumberland are advised that Pupil Premium can and should be used to ensure that children in receipt of this support are able to access music tuition. Parents should enquire with their child's school about this. Many schools choose to partially or fully subsidise tuition in order to remove barriers to access. A discount of £30 per term is available to students having music lessons with a Music Partnership North tutor as part of a GCSE or A-Level course.

Parents and Carers of children in receipt of such lessons should refer directly to their child's school remission and charging policy if they feel they are eligible for either a mandatory or discretionary remission of fees.

Parents or Carers of students in Year 3 or above that are in receipt of Free School Meals while living in or attending a school in Newcastle or Northumberland are eligible to receive financial support for instrumental or vocal lessons. A 50% remission of fees is provided in these cases.

Support is offered until the end of the academic year, to a maximum of 33 lessons, based upon continuing eligibility, satisfactory attendance and progress by the student. This information forms part of the annual student progress report to parents each summer term.

Newcastle and Northumberland Councils offering financial support may operate a waiting list if they receive more applications than the available funding. Looked after Children are eligible for a 100% remission of fees.

We encourage children and young people to join a suitable ensemble as soon as their teacher recommends that they are of an appropriate standard.

Progress and attendance are closely monitored by your child's tutor and where we have concerns over attendance and/or progress the tutor will alert you at the earliest opportunity.

### **Loan and purchase of Instruments and other Equipment**

In most cases MPN can provide all children and young people in receipt of subsidised lessons by one of its tutors a loan of a suitable instrument free of charge. This is usually for an initial period of a year but can be extended where required in discussion with your child's instrumental tutor.

Parents/Carers are expected to provide other equipment such as music, tutor books and consumables (such as reeds, sticks and strings etc.) to support their child's continued progress.

[MPNCharity.com](http://MPNCharity.com) was set up with the specific intention of helping to make musical opportunities more accessible to children and young people in Northumberland and Newcastle. Families can apply to the charity for financial support in order to access tuition and ensemble provision in both Local Authority areas. The charity is independent of Music Partnership North, and a board of trustees meet at least termly to consider applications for support.

## **Decision Making**

All decisions for remission of fees are made by Lead and Deputy Lead Officers of Newcastle and Northumberland

## **Review and Changes to this policy**

Charges made to schools and individuals for activities provided by MPN are subject to annual review each spring. All changes to charges are only made where necessary and in line with Council guidelines or where external factors dictate a greater increase to the cost of a particular activity.