



Aston Community Education Trust

Charges & Remissions Policy 2024/25



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| DOCUMENT CONTROL | | POLICY LEVEL – Trust with LGB Consultation | |
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| BUSINESS LEAD | CFO | AUTHOR | P Corbett |
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Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| 1. Aims | 3 |
| 2. Legislation and Guidance | 3 |
| 3. Definitions | 3 |
| 4. Roles and responsibilities | 3 |
| 4.1 The Board of Trustees..... | 3 |
| 4.2 Principals | 3 |
| 4.3 Staff | 3 |
| 4.4 Parents | 3 |
| 5. Where charges cannot be made | 4 |
| 6. Where charges can be made | 5 |
| 7. Voluntary contributions | 6 |
| 8. Activities we charge for | 7 |
| 9. Remissions | 7 |
| 10. Monitoring arrangements | 7 |



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1. Aims

Aston Community Education Trust 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
- Offer a range of activities and visits whilst minimising the financial barriers that may prevent some pupils from taking full advantage of these opportunities.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on [charging for academy activities](#) and [the Education Act 1996](#), sections 449 to 462 of which set out the law on charging for academy activities in England. Academies are needed to follow this Act through their funding agreements.

It is also based on guidance from the DfE on [statutory policies for academies and academy trusts](#).

This policy follows our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

Charge: a fee payable for specifically defined activities

Remission: the cancellation of a charge which would normally be payable

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for approving the charging and remissions policy but can delegate this to a committee.

The Board of Trustees also has overall responsibility for checking the implementation of this policy.

4.2 Principals

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

4.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the charging and remissions policy consistently
- Notifying the Principal of any specific circumstances which they are unsure about or where they are not certain if the policy applies
- The academy will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4 Parents

Parent/carers are expected to notify staff or the principal of any concerns or queries about the charging and remissions policy.

5. Where charges cannot be made

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

5.1 Education

- Admission applications
- Education provided during academy hours (including the supply of any materials, books, instruments, or other equipment)
- Education provided outside academy hours if it is part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the academy
 - Religious education
- Instrumental or vocal tuition, for pupils learning individually or in groups, unless the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's parent
- Entry for a prescribed public examination if the pupil has been prepared for it at the academy
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the academy

5.2 Transport

- Transporting registered pupils/students to or from the academy premises, where the local authority has a statutory obligation to provide transport
- Transporting registered pupils/students to other premises where the governing board or local authority has arranged for pupils to be educated

Transport that enables a pupil/student to meet an examination requirement when he or she has been prepared for that examination at the academy

- Transport provided in connection with an educational visit

5.3 Residential visits

- Education provided on any visit that takes place during academy hours
- Education provided on any visit that takes place outside academy hours if it is part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the academy
 - Religious education
- Supply teachers, covering for teachers who are absent from academy, accompanying pupils on a residential visit

6. Where charges can be made

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

6.1 Education

- Any materials, books, instruments, or equipment, where the child's parent/carer wishes them to own them
- Optional extras (see section 6.2)
- Music and vocal tuition, in limited circumstances (see section 6.3)
- Certain early years provision
- Community facilities
- Examination re-sit(s) if the pupil is being prepared for the re-sit(s) at the academy **and** the student fails, without good reason, to meet any examination requirement for a syllabus
- Cost of examination fees where the student has not been prepared by the academy or for entry to an examination against the advice of the academy
- Entries for examination re-sits where the academy has not provided additional tuition
- Parent/carers requesting an examination paper to be remarked will be required to pay the remark fee, however if the new grade exceeds the original the cost will be refunded

6.2 Optional extras

We can charge for activities known as 'optional extras'. In these cases, academies can charge for providing materials, books, instruments, or equipment. The following are optional extras:

- Education provided outside of academy time that is not part of:
 - The national curriculum
 - A syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the academy
 - Religious education
- Transport (other than transport that is needed to take the pupil to academy or to other premises where the local authority or governing board has arranged for the pupil to be provided with education)
- Board and lodging for a pupil/student on a residential visit
- Extended day services offered to pupils (such as breakfast clubs, after-academy clubs, tea, and supervised homework sessions)

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
- The cost of buildings and accommodation
- Support 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 pupils/students will not be greater than the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils/students taking part.

Any charge will not include an element of subsidy for any other pupils/students who wish to take part in the activity but whose parent/carers are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

In cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during academy hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those pupils who do not wish to take part.

Parental agreement is necessary for the provision of an optional extra which is to be charged for.

6.3 Music tuition

Academies can charge for vocal or instrumental tuition provided either individually or to groups of pupils/students, provided that the tuition is provided at the request of the pupil's/student's parent.

Charges may not exceed the cost of the provision, including the cost of the staff giving the tuition.

Charges cannot be made:

- If the teaching is an essential part of the national curriculum
- If the teaching is provided under the first access to the Key Stage 2 instrumental and vocal tuition programme
- For a pupil/student who is looked after by a local authority

6.4 Residential visits

We can charge for board and lodging on residential visits, but the charge must not exceed the actual cost.

7. Voluntary contributions

As an exception to the requirements set out in section 5 of this policy, academies within the trust can ask for voluntary contributions from parent/carers to fund activities which would not otherwise be possible.

Some activities for which an academy may ask parent/carers for voluntary contributions include:

- Materials and ingredients provided by an academy for practical subjects where parent/carers say they wish to receive the finished article
- Cost of educational visit and other activities

There is no obligation for parents to make any contribution, and no child will be excluded from an activity if their parents are unwilling or unable to pay.

If the academy is unable to raise enough funds for an activity or visit, then it will be cancelled.

8. Activities we charge for

The academy will charge for the following activities:

- Breakfast and after academy clubs
- School trips and activities outside the national curriculum
- Breakages and replacements because of damage caused wilfully or negligently by pupils/students

For regular activities, the charges for each activity will be decided by the governing board and reviewed in each year. Parents/carers will be informed of the charges for the coming year in September each year.

9. Remissions

In some circumstances, the academy may not charge for items or activities set out in sections 6 and 8 of this policy. This will be at the discretion of the governing board and will depend on the activity in question.

In respect of the voluntary contributions the Local Governing Body have decided that for pupils/students in receipt of free school meals, a reduction to the voluntary contribution of £5 from the cost of a day visit and a reduction of £10 per night in respect of residential visits will apply.

Parent/carers faced with financial difficulties with a pupil/student in receipt of free school meals may apply in confidence to an academy for financial support with optional activities. Remission of charges in part or in full will be authorised by the principal in discussion with the finance staff.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The CFO monitors charges and remissions and ensures that academies follow this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the CFO annually. (recommended by DFE) At every review, the policy will be approved by the Trust Board.



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