

Aspire Schools Charging Policy

(last reviewed July 2019)

Introduction

The Governing Body of The Aspire Schools Federation acknowledges the right of every student to receive free school education and understands that activities offered wholly or mainly during normal teaching time must be made available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost.

The Governors also recognise the valuable contribution that the wide range of additional activities, trips and residential experiences can make towards pupils' education, and aim to promote and provide such activities both as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional activities.

School Policy

Parents are made aware of the Policy, and where they can consult it.

Permitted charges

Charging is never a statutory requirement - if a charge is permissible and is to be made, parents are always informed of the charge in advance. Where a charge is made for board and lodging, parents of pupils who are in receipt of free school meals entitlement will also be entitled to the remission of charges.

For more information regarding eligibility criteria, refer to <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>.

A similar entitlement applies where the trip takes place outside school hours but is necessary for the National Curriculum, forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination, or the syllabus for Religious Education.

From the beginning of Academic Year 2011/12, funding for Music tuition was withdrawn, except for Looked After Children. At the meeting of the Finance Committee on 09 November 2011, (Minute 12.12), Governors approved the funding of Music tuition from school resources.

The Governing Body agreed a charge of £2.40 for a school meal from September 2018 unless the child is entitled to free school meals.

The school does not charge for:

1. Admission to school
2. Education in school hours

3. Entry for any prescribed public examination for which a pupil has been prepared at the school, unless, without good reason, the pupil:

- does not attend school and/or the subject lessons
- does not complete independent study work, including homework
- and coursework does not perform at a level equivalent to a GCSE grade in the mock examinations

4. Books, materials, instruments, equipment or incidental transport, for use in connection with education during school hours or within the national curriculum, or for statutory Religious Education.

Parents may be asked for voluntary contributions for any visits/activities in school time and outside it, but no child will be excluded on the grounds that a contribution has not been made.

Recovery of the cost of breakages and fines is permitted. The policy of the Aspire Schools Federation is that:

1. All intentional damage will be costed, work undertaken and parents/carers billed for a specific amount. With effect from January 2007, for deliberate damage costing up to £50, parents are asked to pay the full amount of repair or replacement. For damage costing more than £50, parents are usually asked to pay £50 plus 10% of any amount in excess of £50.

2. At its meeting on 07 March 2012, (Minute 12.25), the Finance Committee of the Governing Body agreed to the introduction of a 'restorative justice' system whereby, if a debt for deliberate damage remained outstanding, the pupil involved would be invited to make reparation by helping with work around school.

3. In cases where the cost of deliberate damage is more than £50 and no attempt has been made to settle the debt, or where an agreed and no reparation arrangement to reimburse has not been complied with, parents will be asked to contribute towards the cost of school activities or external accreditation.

4. If an undertaking to pay by instalments is made, parents should be warned that they must honour their agreement to make regular payments and that, if they fail to do so, the Governing Body of The Aspire Schools Federation will be left with no alternative than to take action to recover the full cost of the damage through the Small Claims Court.

5. All accidental damage is usually covered by the school's Repairs and Maintenance allocation.

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher will report to the Governors' Finance Committee on any relevant aspects of the working of the Policy as appropriate. The Governing Body will review the document every year. The Aspires School follows the Wirral Education Authority guidance on the letting of school premises as outlined in their Scheme for Financing Schools.