



Charging Policy

Date of Policy: Summer 2019

Next Review Date: Summer 2021

At Alperton Community School we will continuously strive to ensure that everyone in our school is treated with respect and dignity. Each person in our school will be given fair and equal opportunities to develop their full potential with positive regard to gender, ethnicity, cultural and religious background, sexuality or disability.

Introduction

This document sets out the Charging Policy of Alperton Community School and provides information to parents on the circumstances where the school would charge for activities, whether these are within school hours or out of school hours.

1. Voluntary Contributions

The Governors wish to inform parents that it is within the law for the school to request voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or in support of any school activity, whether during or outside school hours, residential or non-residential. The size of the voluntary contribution does not have to be linked to the actual cost of the activity, but the parental contribution will not exceed the cost per student.

The Governors may therefore ask parents to contribute to the school funds at the beginning of the academic year, for example in support of specific student activities or a project requiring additional funding e.g., the purchase of a minibus.

There will be no obligation for parents to contribute and students will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to the request. This means all students will take part in an activity if it takes place, regardless of whether a contribution has been received. However, when sufficient funds are not forthcoming from voluntary contributions the activity will be cancelled.

2. Charges

Charges will be made in the following cases except in exceptional circumstances.

- a) **Visits during the school day** – When arranging school trips, visits, or activities which enrich the curriculum and student experience, the school will invite parents/careers, by way of a letter, to return a signed slip of interest in the trip and if appropriate the voluntary contribution towards the cost. A voluntary charge will be made to cover the cost of educational visits and other activities. However, as detailed at the outset, charges cannot be enforced where this forms part of the curriculum. All contributions are voluntary. Where the level of non-payment renders a trip financially unviable consideration will be given to cancellation unless the school is able to cover the shortfall. If the event does proceed each student would be allowed to participate without discrimination, irrespective of whether their voluntary contributions are received or not.
- b) **Residential visits** – Where at least half of the time away from home is not normal school time or where the work undertaken is not an integral part of the examination course, the trip can be classified as optional. Any charge in respect of an optional extra requires parental agreement and willingness to meet the charges. Parents should be made aware that the activity might be cancelled if insufficient contributions are received. If the visit is deemed to have taken place during the school day, or is part of the curriculum or is

preparation for a public examination then only the cost of board and lodging can be passed onto parents and this cannot exceed the actual cost. The school will not be able to refund payments which have been or are required to be passed through to the agent organising a visit or residential.

- c) **Costs associated with individual or small group tuition in the playing of a musical instrument whether in or out of school hours**, unless it is provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination.
- d) **Optional extras/activities which take place wholly or mainly outside school hours** but which are not provided as part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination and are not required in order to fulfil statutory duties relating to the Curriculum or to Religious Education.
- e) **The cost of entering a student for public examination not prescribed in regulation**, and for preparing the students for a prescribed examination outside school hours.
- f) **Re-sits of prescribed public examinations where no further preparation has been provided by the school**. Parents are reminded that an entry fee for a prescribed public examination will be recovered if the student fails to complete the examination requirements without good reason. A returnable deposit for examination entries may in some cases be required. Students deciding to retake modules will need to pay in advance for the re-entry.
- g) **The cost of transport which is not provided by the LA or school to travel direct from the student's home to an activity sanctioned though not provided by the LA or the school** eg a journey directly from home to work experience.
- h) **The supply of ingredients and materials for practical subjects** – charges will be made for materials and ingredients for practical subjects where parents indicate they wish to receive the finished articles. The policy however is to blanket charge all eligible students and to only allow those that have paid to take work home. Any student involved in projects where materials are uniquely expensive pay for materials in advance, based on prices obtained beforehand from the Subject Leader. The School classes such income as class sales.
- i) **Deposits for examinations** in cases where students' attendance at school has been unsatisfactory.
- j) The School reserves the right to charge **for any additional GCSEs or other examinations** for which a student might wish to be entered above the standard number taken.

- k) **Failure to sit an exam without good reason.** Parents are reminded that an entry fee for a prescribed public examination will be recovered if the student fails to sit an exam without good reason.
- l) **Deposits for textbooks** which are fully refundable on the return of the textbook.
- m) Sixth Form Students will be asked to pay a **Common Room charge** of up to £10 per year in order to maintain the common room and resources in it for student use. This money will be used wholly by the Common Room Committee on items for the common room.

3. Payment for damage to property

The Governors believe that students need to learn to be responsible for their actions. If their actions lead to damage of school property, or personal property belonging to another student, member of staff or visitor to the school, they will be expected to pay for the damage.

Parents are expected to explain to their children the importance of the policy and the inevitability of payment should damage be caused by deliberate intent, neglect, carelessness or the failure to obey instructions of a member of staff.

Replacement is usually an immediate priority for the school. Therefore the Governors will expect parents to pay the money owing immediately, unless the sum is over £150 in which case payment by instalment will be arranged. The cost over a longer period of time would be expected, in most cases, to be borne by the student, but the responsibility of removing pocket money or charging students from their part-time job remains that of parents.

The financial cost relating to breakages/damage/fines are recoverable from parents and can be pursued as a civil debt. A charge will also apply for loss or damage to school property which is placed under the responsibility of the student and may be taken off the premises.

Parents and staff will need to make students aware of the importance of respect for property and of the real value involving equipping and maintaining its school.

4. Remission of Parent/Student charges

Parents of students who are receiving free school meals or on the pupil premium register may apply to the school for financial support for any school charges.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Governing Body will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness.