

Areté Learning Trust – Charging & Remissions Policy



Ownership	Areté Learning Trust
Date Updated	September 2019

In accordance with Section 33 of the Trust's Funding Agreement, Areté Learning Trust is required to determine the charging and remissions policies required to address Section 457 of the Education Act 1996 and for these to be approved by the Secretary of State for Education. The Board of Directors recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of activities including school visits, extra-curricular activities and residential experiences can make towards students' academic, personal and social education and seek to provide these experiences, whilst minimising cost for parents.

Throughout this policy, the term "parents" means all those having parental responsibility for a child.

PRINCIPLES:

The general principle is that no charge will be made for books, materials, instruments, equipment or transport for use in connection with education if the education is:

- within school hours (but excluding the mid-day break)
required for the curriculum but out of school hours
- for statutory religious education
- for a prescribed public examination prepared for by the school

However, there are exceptions where ALT schools can make charges. Charges are permitted under the Act to meet the costs of the following:

- board and lodging on residential educational trips non-educational trips music tuition and the attendant hiring of musical instruments where the tuition does not form part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination
- materials/ingredients required to produce a finished product made in school (e.g. in art, design, food or technology lessons), where the finished article will be owned by the parent/carer or the student
- entering a student for a public examination which is not prescribed in regulations or where a re-sit is requested, and for preparing the student for such an examination out of school hours
- entering a student for a public examination against the wishes of the school
- applications for re-marking an examination paper where the re-mark is requested
- by the parent or student
- re-sits of prescribed public examinations where no further timetabled preparation has been provided by the school
- voluntary optional extras provided outside of school hours or mainly outside school hours

In all cases where a permitted charge is made, parents will be told the amount in advance. Charges will not be set with the intention of exceeding the actual cost per student incurred.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

The Act permits voluntary contributions to be requested for any specific visit or activity. No individual student will be excluded from a visit or activity if his/her parent chooses not to pay the voluntary contribution. However, should voluntary contributions fail to defray a substantial proportion of the costs of a visit, then the visit might not take place.

OTHER CHARGES

To engage actively in learning, be ready to learn and be able to learn in many different contexts, it is essential that students have the right basic equipment e.g. pens, pencils, rulers, calculators. Whilst there is no legal or formal requirement for parents to provide these items ALT schools actively encourages parents and students to purchase them.

We may charge for:

- optional items of equipment which are offered for sale by an ALT school e.g. calculators, revision guides, etc. No profit will be made on any such sales.
- photocopying and/or printing which is not required by a member of staff
- damage to or loss of school property caused wilfully or negligently by a student

REFUNDS

Refunds of charges or voluntary contributions received will be made in the following circumstances:

- cancellation of trips or activities due to circumstances beyond the school's control
- if a decision is made that a student should not take part in a trip or activity for whatever reason. Refunds will be reduced by the amount of any non-refundable deposits made, except when it is the school's decision to exclude the student from the trip/activity
- when a student, having entered for a public examination against the school's wishes, achieves a pass grade in that examination
- in the event that an examination re-mark requested by a parent or student is successful (n.b. the reimbursement is made by the examination board)
- in some other circumstances, at the discretion of the Headteacher

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Requests for help from parents on eligible benefits will be considered and assistance provided within the limits of any support fund that may be available. Complete confidentiality will be observed in all such matters.

Eligible benefits include:

- Income Support
- Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based)

- Child Tax Credit, but not entitled to Working Tax Credit and annual income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) does not exceed £16,190
- Support under part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999
- The 'Guaranteed Element' of Pension Credit.

Where a parent does not receive an eligible benefit the school will nonetheless consider sympathetically requests for assistance in the phasing of contributions, *provided that all such phased contributions have been made by the time the trip or event takes place.*