



Charging and Remissions Policy

Reviewed October 2015

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Charging

Prospect Education (Technology) Trust Ltd (the Trust), through Ashcroft Technology Academy provides a free education to all its students throughout their education with the Academy. Within this provision the Trust recognises the valuable contribution that a wide range of additional enrichment activities such as clubs, day trips, residential trips and experiences of other environments can provide for each student's all round educational experience, aiding their personal and social development. It therefore aims to offer a broad programme of trips and activities most of which are accessible to as many students as possible, independent of their parents' financial means.

The Trust reserves the right to make a charge to parents in certain circumstances in line with government guidance and sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996. Whilst ensuring that no student should have their access to the curriculum limited by charges, it is necessary to establish and maintain a fair and coherent system of charges where these are deemed necessary.

The following is a detailed, though not exhaustive, list of when charges may be made, bearing in mind the above:-

- Music tuition for which there is a parental agreement and where it does not form an integral part of the curriculum or part of the syllabus for a prescribed examination and as set out in The Charges for Music Tuition (England) Regulations 2007.
- Trips which are not part of the national curriculum and take place mainly outside of Academy hours. Board, lodgings and travel costs will be charged for residential trips, subject to statutory exceptions. The board and lodging element of any trip/residential during school time may also be charged subject to any exemptions for those entitled to free school meals, as would the cost of outdoor pursuit courses.
- Where student inappropriate behaviour requires the replacement of defaced, damaged or broken furniture, fixtures and fittings or fabric of the Academy or other facility, whilst acting as a representative of the Academy.
- Lost or damaged learning resources, text or exercise books.
- The cost of materials or ingredients required in a practical subject where the teacher requests such contribution if the student and/or parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the finished product.

In the case of examinations, charges will be made in the following circumstances:

- Where a request is made for accreditation in a subject that is on the set list but is not a normal part of the student's academic programme of study.
- When a request is made for a different form of accreditation to that advised and provided by the Academy.

- When a student is entered for an examination but without good reason/medical certification, fails to sit the examination that the Academy has paid the entry fee for.
- When a student has failed to meet the entry criteria for a certain examination but still wishes to be entered. Such fees would be returnable upon achievement of the required grades in the subject.

Voluntary contributions may be invited for trips that take place mainly within Academy hours but not for any education provided during such a trip or for the cost of providing temporary staff for teachers absent from the Academy while accompanying students on the trip. No student may be excluded from the trip through an inability to pay, but the Academy reserves the right to cancel the trip if the level of contributions does not meet its budgetary requirements.

No student will be excluded from any trip or visit because of an inability to pay, providing it is a necessary part of the work of the Academy.

Remission

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the Trust has agreed that some activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to parents in particular circumstances. This remissions policy sets out the circumstances in which such charges will be reduced or waived altogether.

Criteria for qualification for remission are as follows:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;
- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190 (Financial Year 2013/14);
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- An income related employment and support allowance that was introduced on 27 October 2008;

Those qualifying under the above criteria will be entitled to free school meals and to have their meal cards automatically credited with a pre determined amount (£2.15 for 2015-16) to be able to purchase a two course meal each day. The Academy will also provide assistance with uniform purchase on entry into Year 7 and again in Year 9 (£50 per year for 2015-16). Furthermore, the Academy provides a one-off travel assistance grant for qualifying students which can be accessed once during each student's education with the Academy (£90 for 2015-16). A 50% reduction in music tuition fees for the learning of one instrument is also provided for students whose parents are in receipt of such benefits.

Students whose parents have specific individual circumstances that have caused temporary hardship, or who have recently moved into hardship but are awaiting entitlement to the qualifying criteria set out above or who make a specific request to the Principal for any other justifiable reason, remission may be granted at the Principal's discretion based upon any evidence provided.

In order to try and minimise the burden on family finances, the Academy will look to publish a list of visits and their approximate cost at the start of the academic year to enable parents to plan ahead and where possible will establish a system for payment by instalments. Trips will not operate on a first pay, first served basis, which could discriminate against students from families on lower incomes.

This policy will be available through the Academy website and will be reviewed regularly by the Finance and Resources Committee.