

The Rise School Charging and Remissions Policy

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1. Introduction

This policy applies to The Rise Free School which is a special free school registered as a Section 41 Institution¹ and is part of a multi-academy trust, Ambitious about Autism Schools Trust (AaAST).

AaAST is a multi-academy trust that runs and supports the development of special schools to enable autistic children and young people to learn, thrive and achieve. Our vision is a future where every autistic child and young person can be themselves and realise their ambitions and our mission is that we stand with autistic children and young people, champion their rights and create opportunities. AaAST schools are funded through Local Authority fees and voluntary income.

2. Charging and Remissions

During the school's day, all activities that are a necessary part of the curriculum will be provided free of charge as this is included within the fee paid for the education placement. This includes any materials, equipment and transport to take children and young people between the school and the activity. There will be no charge for any activity that is an essential part of the syllabus for an approved examination or accredited course of study.

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school's day which entail additional costs, for example visits to a museum. In these circumstances no child or young person will be prevented from participating because his/her parents/carers cannot or will not contribute. (If insufficient funds are available, it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities)

From time to time we may invite a non-school based organisation to arrange an activity during the school's day. Such organisations may charge the school who may then ask parents/carers to make a voluntary contribution. Again, no child or young person will be prevented from participating because his/her parents/carers cannot or will not contribute. (If insufficient funds are available, it may be necessary to curtail or cancel activities.)

2.1 Optional activities outside of the school day

We will charge for optional, extra activities provided outside of the school day, for example a visit to the theatre. Such activities are not part of the curriculum nor are they part of an examination syllabus.

2.2 Education partly during the school day

If a non-residential activity happens partly inside the school day and partly outside of it, there will be no charge if most of the time to be spent on the activity falls within the school day. Conversely, if the bigger proportion of time spent falls outside of the normal day, charges may be made. When such activities are arranged, parents/carers will be told how the charges were calculated.

2.3 Residential Visits

Charges will be made towards board and lodging, except for children or young people whose parents/carers are in receipt of eligible benefits, however, no child or young person will be prevented from participating because his/her parents/carers cannot or will not contribute. On many occasions, donations from funders have enabled the school to heavily subsidise educational visits and significantly reduce the charge to parents/carers.

2.4 Minibus

Travel in the school mini-bus is free.

¹ Section 41 of the Children and Families Act, Secretary of State publishes a list of approved institutions.

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2.5 School Meals

School meals can be provided at lunchtime and are optional. Parents are able to pay online for school meals using a secure web application called ParentPay.

If a pupil is eligible for Free School Meals, the meals would be provided free of charge.

2.6 Calculating charges

When charges are made for any activity, whether during or outside of the school's day, they will be based on the actual costs incurred, divided by the total number of pupils participating. There will be no levy on those who can pay to support those who cannot or will not. Support for cases of hardship will come through voluntary contributions and fundraising.

Parents/carers who would qualify for support are those who are in receipt of eligible benefits.

Eligible benefits are:

- Income support;
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit;
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190);
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit; or
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get).

The principles of best value will be applied when planning activities that incur costs to the school and/or charges to parents/carers.

3. Further information

Website: www.theriseschool.com

Phone: 0208 0990640

Email: info@theriseschool.com

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