



## COLLECTION OF SCHOOL MEALS MONEY AND SCHOOL MEALS DEBT POLICY (YEAR 3 – YEAR 6)

### **Introduction**

This policy concerns the collection of school meals money and the approach to be taken in the cases of debts arising when parents/carers fail to pay for school meals. Parents/carers will be advised a copy of this policy is on the school website.

### **General Principle**

School meals must be paid for in advance. If a pupil is to have meals for the duration of the week monies must be received before the start of that week or in exceptional circumstances if the pupil is having an occasional meal, monies must be received on the day of the meal.

If debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on all pupils' education in school is used to pay for debts incurred by individual parents / carers. The governing body see this as unacceptable and request that all parents / carers give this policy their full support.

### **Free School Meals Entitlement**

Pupils will not be provided with a school meal unless it is paid for, except those confirmed as entitled to free school meals. If parents/carers believe that their child(children) may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals they should contact the County Council on 01254 220711. As this allowance is a statutory right for qualifying pupils it is important that parents/carers make use of it. The school is only allowed to provide free school meals to pupils where this is officially approved and informed in writing by the Local Authority.

### **Procedure for Collection of Arrears**

It is accepted that on occasion arrears may arise for various reasons eg pupils forget their dinner money or are absent on the day it is collected. However, arrears cannot be allowed to accumulate. The governing body has therefore agreed the following policy where arrears arise.

A gentle reminder letter will be sent home after 1 week of accumulated arrears (Appendix 1).

The parent/carer will be informed in writing when **two** weeks' arrears have accumulated and advised to make immediate payment (Appendix 2).

A final letter to the parent/carer informing them that no meals will be provided for their child(children) if payment has not been received by a specified date, (ie in accordance with the policy the date when two weeks' arrears have accumulated).

No meals to be provided to pupils when arrears exceed two weeks and the parent/carer advised to send in a packed lunch for their child/children.

Once the final letter deadline has expired the debt will be passed onto the debt recovery team at Lancashire County Council where legal proceeding may begin.

APPENDIX 1

Date:

Gentle reminder letter

Child's name:

Dear Parent/ Carer

Re Child's name:

According to our records it appears that there is dinner money outstanding for your child as to today. The amount due for payment is £ \_\_\_\_\_. We would be grateful if you would kindly clear this balance straightaway.

Please pay by SCOPAY or if you wish to pay by cheque, please make it payable to St Anne's CE Primary School. If you have any queries, please contact the school office.

If you have any query or difficulty with payment of this amount, please let us know immediately and we will endeavour to help.

For your information, the last payment shown on our system was made on \_\_\_\_\_.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Charlotte Hartley  
Headteacher

APPENDIX 2

Date:

**Accumulated School Meal Arrears**

Dear Parent/ Carer

Child's name:

We have written to you previously regarding «FirstName»'s outstanding dinner money and according to our records, we still have not received any payment. The amount due for payment is £«AmountOverdue» and as per our School Meal Payment Policy unless we receive payment on Monday morning your child will need a packed lunch until the debt has been paid.

If you have any query or difficulty with payment of this amount, please let us know and we will endeavour to help.

For your information, the last payment shown on our system was made on «LastPaymentDate».

In a case when a debt payment is not received nor a packed lunch provided, we will phone to ask you to come to school with the money, pay via SCO-PAY or to provide sandwiches before lunch time.

If you have any queries and/ or wish to discuss this matter please contact the school office.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Charlotte Hartley  
Headteacher

APPENDIX 3

Date:

**Non-payment of school dinner money arrears.**

Child's name:

Dear Parent/ Carer

Our records show that you have not cleared the school dinner money arrears for your child(children) despite previous letters sent home on \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Arrears to date total £ \_\_\_\_\_

In following the school policy on dinner money arrears, a copy of which you were informed is available on the school's website, I must inform you that if payment is not received within 5 working days of the date of this letter, the debt will be referred to the LCC Debt Recovery Team.

I am obliged to warn you that the debt recovery procedure can result in a summons to Court. Until the debt is cleared. Cheques are to be made payable to St Anne's CE Primary School or please pay via SCO-PAY.

Should you wish to discuss any issue regarding this debt, please contact the school.

Yours sincerely

Charlotte Hartley  
Headteacher