



School Meals Arrears Policy March 2017

School Meals Arrears Policy

Introduction

This policy forms guidance in the cases of debts arising when parents/carers fail to pay for school meals. Such situations need to be dealt with sensitively.

General Principle

If a child is to have meals for the duration of the week monies must be received on the Monday of that week (or the first school day of the week if different).

Free School Meals

Only those children officially approved and informed in writing by the LA should receive free school meals.

KS2 Children - Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 (EYFS and KS1 are offered free school meals)

Procedure for Collection of Arrears

Dinner monies arrears are classed as 'arrears' when the following occurs:

- A child takes meals on every day of the week and payment has not been received by the Tuesday or
- If the amount is in excess of £6.45 (3 school meals).

The following procedure takes place to arrange for the collection of this 'arrears'.

- 1) On the **Tuesday** a reminder slip is sent via the child informing them of the amount in arrears (appendix 1).
- 2) If the debt has not been received by the **Thursday** a **First Letter** will be processed via the dinner money software (appendix 2) and sent via the child.
- 3) If full-payment has not been received **3 working days** after the **First Letter** (by Wednesday of the next week) a telephone call will be made by the school administrator.
- 4) If full-payment is still not received **3 working days** after the school administrator has contacted parents by telephone, and the debt has risen to more than £20.00, then the Headteacher will call the parents and arrange a payment plan, also stating that packed lunches should be brought until the account is settled.
- 5) If full-payment has not been made **3 working days** after discussion with the Headteacher a **Final Letter** will be sent to the home address (appendix 3). The letter will also state that the parent/carer has the option to contact the school to make an appointment with the headteacher in order to discuss the situation and determine a solution; the letter will also include guidance to parents on accessing **Free School Meals**.
- 6) If full payment is not received **3 working days** after the **Final Letter** then the school will start a debt collection process with County Hall and the Welfare Team



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- 7) No further school meals will be provided to pupils that have had outstanding arrears forwarded to NYCC for recovery unless paid for in advance. If payment is made prior to stage 4, the account MUST remain in credit to prevent the process happening again.

Administration

- 8) Once the final letter deadline has expired, and the intention is to pass the arrears to the Local Authority to recover, a letter should be forwarded to the Welfare Team at the Education Office, Harrogate.
- School Name
 - Pupil Name (in full)
 - Parents/Guardian name and address
 - Arrears to be recovered
 - Specific dates to which the arrears relate
- 9) The debt will be dealt with at the Education Office and various transactions will take place on the Oracle.
- 10) Where a pupil(s) transfers to another school within the Local Authority, the school should contact the new school to advise them that outstanding unpaid arrears have been forwarded to the Local Authority for collection.

Review Date March 2018



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Appendix 1

Date

According to our records on ParentPay your account for school meals has not been paid for this week and has a balance due today of £.....

Please log onto your child's account and arrange to pay this as soon as possible. If you have lost/forgotten your log-in details please contact the school office.



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Appendix 2

I am writing to let you know you that according to our records you have arrears on your child's dinner money account. In order for your child to continue to receive school lunches it is important to keep your account in credit.

Our records show that as at 3 March 2017 the debt balance for <consumerforename/> <consumersurname/> Class: <class/> is <balance/>. Please can you arrange for this to be paid by using ParentPay, our secure online payment system. You can use the login previously provided. Please visit www.parentpay.com.

Your username and password are:

User Name <loginname/> Password <password/>

You can check your account balance at any time by logging into your ParentPay account.

If you wish to pay by an alternative method, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears or if you have difficulty making payment please contact me at admin@kildwick.n-yorks.sch.uk or telephone 01535 633682 to discuss this further.



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Appendix 3

Date

Parent or carer of XXXX, Class X
Address held on Sims

Dear Parent/carers

FINAL DEBT REMINDER

Despite previous communication, our records show that you have still not paid dinner money for your child
XXX XXX Class: X

As at [date] your account is now showing a debt of -£XXX. Please arrange for this money to be paid immediately. Failure to bring your account up to date could result in a request that your child brings a packed lunch until the account is settled. If the debt has not been paid after 3 days from the above date, the school will proceed with the debt recovery procedure and refer the matter to the Welfare Office.

Once the debt is cleared please ensure your child's school meal account is always in credit via the online payment via ParentPay; using the login already provided.

Your username and password are:

User Name [XXXXXX] Password [XXXXX]

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact me immediately.

Yours sincerely

Mr Tim Whitehead
Headteacher