



Alston Moor Federation

Debt Write-Off Policy

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1. Introduction

The Alston Moor Federation is committed to the responsible management of public funds and expects all debts owed to the Federation's schools to be settled in a timely manner. This policy outlines the approach to managing debts and the specific and limited circumstances under which a debt may be written off.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure consistency, transparency, and fairness in the handling of debts, while acknowledging the need for compassion and flexibility in exceptional cases of serious financial hardship.

3. General Principles

- All debts owed to any of the schools within the Alston Moor Federation are expected to be paid in full.
- Reasonable steps will be taken to recover outstanding debts using a fair and proportionate approach.
- Support and flexibility will be offered to families struggling to pay, including:
 - Time extensions to pay.
 - Payment plans tailored to individual circumstances.
 - Assistance in identifying and accessing financial support, such as grants or third-party funding.

4. Criteria for Debt Write-Off

Debts will only be considered for write-off in cases of **serious financial hardship**, where all other avenues of support and recovery have been exhausted. Write-offs will only be authorised:

- In **extreme circumstances** where repayment would cause further hardship to the family.

- Following **full consideration by the Headteacher** and presentation of the case to the **Finance Sub-Committee**.

5. Approval Process

- The Headteacher will assess each case of financial hardship on an individual basis.
- Where a case is deemed appropriate for write-off, the Headteacher will submit a formal recommendation to the Finance Sub-Committee, outlining:
 - The amount of the debt.
 - The efforts made to recover the debt.
 - Details of the family's financial circumstances (confidentially).
 - Support measures previously offered.
- The FGB will review the recommendation and decide whether to approve the write-off.
- The decision of the FGB is final and will be recorded in the minutes of the relevant meeting.

6. Confidentiality

All cases of debt and financial hardship will be handled sensitively and in strict confidence to protect the dignity and privacy of families.

7. Monitoring and Reporting

- The Business Manager or appropriate finance staff will maintain records of all debts and any cases considered for write-off.
- An annual summary of debts written off (excluding any personally identifiable information) will be presented to the full Governing Body for transparency and oversight.

8. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body or more frequently if required by changes in legislation or local financial procedures.

Approved by: Alston Moor Federation Governing Body

Date of Approval: 20.5.25

Review Date: May 2027
