



The Federation of
Chadsmoor Community Infant and Nursery School &
Chadsmoor C.E (VC) Junior School

Debt Recovery Policy

Review Annual Autumn Term
Reviewed: October 2023

Ratified : 17th October 2023

1.	<p>General Requirements</p> <p>The school will take all reasonable measures to vigorously collect debts as part of its management of public funds. A debt will be written off only after all reasonable measures (commensurate of the size and nature of the debt) have been taken to recover it.</p> <p>The school's debt recovery policy will observe the relevant financial regulations and guidance set out in the Scheme for Financing Schools and any other legal requirements. In particular :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governing bodies are authorised to write off debts in respect of individual debtors provided such decisions are minuted in the meeting of the full governing body. • Governing bodies will be required to follow the debt recovery procedures as outlined in the Financial Regulations. • Where an individual debt exceeds £1,500 then the school must consult the Director of Finance and Resources before taking action to write off such a debt. • A formal record of any debts written off will be maintained and retained for 7 years
2	<p>Acceptable 'credit period'</p> <p>Invoices In general payment for all goods and services supplied by the school should be collected within 30 days upon receipt of an invoice, this includes Lettings.</p> <p>Early Bird club Payment needs to be paid in advance of any session booked, via parent pay.</p> <p>After-school clubs Payment needs to be paid in advance of any session booked, via parent pay.</p>

	<p>Nursery Provision For children accessing 30 funded hours – the lunch supervision fee needs to be paid termly in advance, via parent pay.</p> <p>For children accessing non-funded extended hours – the session fee needs to be paid monthly in advance, via parent pay or Childcare Choices if parents opt to apply for the tax-free childcare.</p> <p>School Lunches School lunches are payable at the Junior School via the Dolce Live Kitchen App. Dolce take responsibility for outstanding payments up to the value of £11.00. The school contacts the parents of any child who reaches the £11.00 debt to inform them a payment must either be made or they must send their child with a packed lunch.</p> <p>If the parent/carer fails to send a packed lunch then any meals need to be authorised by the Headteacher as the school are then responsible for debt above this level. Failure for the parent/carer to provide their child with a packed lunch may involve the child protection officer</p> <p>Residential School Trips As Residential School Trips take place partly out of school hours and are therefore not classed as a voluntary contribution, therefore these must be paid in full by parents prior to the trip taking place. Normally a deposit secures the booking for the child and this is followed by a payment plan allowing affordable regular payments. A child will be withdrawn from a Residential Trip if the trip is not paid in full prior to departure. (see 4.2 below)</p> <p>Music Tuition As this is an optional service provided by the school, payment must be made in advance via Parent Pay.</p>
3.	<p>Reporting of outstanding debt levels</p> <p>The Headteacher/School Business Manager will ensure that the level of outstanding debt is regularly monitored. Suitable records will be maintained to detail individual debts and the total value of debt to the school.</p>
4.	<p>Debt Recovery Procedures</p>
4.1	<p>External - Payment of Invoices raised through the 'My Finance' system are monitored as part of the month end procedures. Invoices exceeding 30 day terms are followed up by initially a phone call to ensure the invoice has been received and is being processed. This is followed by a written 'overdue payment' reminder. Then a second and final written reminder when the debt exceeds 60 days.</p> <p>Payment of Lettings are monitored monthly and debt recovery procedures dealt with in the same way.</p>
4.2	<p>Parents/Guardians - Where payments have not been received by parents/guardians in advance or at the point of sale then verbal contact and/or text message is sent. This is followed up by a written reminder. Then a final written reminder. Services are immediately withdrawn until the required payment has been received. The Headteacher would liaise with Parents regarding outstanding payments in respect of residential trips, prior to any trip being withdrawn.</p>

4.3	Staff – Staff debts can accumulate from staff school lunches they have taken. Any Staff debts can be recovered via payroll at the end of their employment and staff will be notified accordingly.
5.	Verbal and Written Reminders Details of all reminders, whether verbal or in writing, should be maintained to prove that all reasonable attempts have been made in a timely manner to recover the debt.
6.	<p>Negotiation of Repayment Terms</p> <p>Debtors are expected to settle the amount owed by a single payment as soon as possible after receiving the initial ‘overdue payment’ reminder.</p> <p>If a debtor requests ‘repayment terms’ these may be negotiated at the discretion of the Headteacher. A record of such agreements entered into will be retained. A letter will be issued to the debtor confirming the agreed terms for repayment. The settlement period should be the shortest that is judged reasonable. The Headteacher will decide whether any debtor who has been granted extended settlement terms will not be offered any further ‘credit’ and in future will be required to pay in advance.</p> <p>However, if people are unable to pay ;</p> <p>The school may reduce or cancel a debt in certain circumstances. A sensitive approach to debt recovery will be carried out, taking the following factors into account.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardship – where paying the debt would cause financial hardship • Ill Health – where our recovery action might cause further ill health • Time – where the debt is so large compared to the person’s income that it would take an unreasonable length of time to pay it all off • Cost – where the value of the debt is less than the cost of recovering it • Multiple debt – where someone owes more than one debt to the school. In this situation an attempt to agree one repayment plan to include all debts will be established.
7.	<p>Costs of Debt Recovery</p> <p>Where the school incurs material additional costs in recovering a debt then the Headteacher will decide whether to seek to recover such costs from the debtor. The debtor will be formally advised in writing that they will be required to pay the additional costs incurred by the school in recovering the debt. This decision and its basis will be recorded and reported to the Finance Committee.</p>