

# Chapelford Village Primary School



## School Meals Debt Policy

Version	Date	Action
1	Spring 2018	New Policy adopted by Governing body 26.3.18
2	Autumn 2021	Policy Reviewed and values updated
3	Autumn 2022	Terminology updated in Letter 2

## Chapelford Village Primary School School Debt Policy

### Rationale

At Chapelford Village Primary School we will endeavour to collect any monies due to the school quickly and efficiently. In order to protect the interests of the school we will follow a strict policy for bad debts to ensure that the financial viability of the school is not put at risk.

### Aims

- To recover monies owed to the school as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- To have clear procedures for dealing with bad debt.
- To be sensitive to the needs of parents when pursuing debts.

### Establishing a debt policy

Chapelford Village Primary School will ensure that parents are aware of this policy in the following ways:

- A letter to parents on an annual basis
- The school's newsletter regularly
- The school website

This will ensure that all parents get the same message in a consistent way. This should be done at least once each year, more often when it is first introduced. All parents should be provided with a copy of the policy when their child joins the school.

Chapelford Village Primary School has adopted a clear '**no debt**' policy relating to the school meal service which will begin on 1st March 2018. Previously the Local Authority would deal with any parent who owes dinner money for their child, however since becoming an Academy, if any debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents. Every parent will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents give this policy their full support.

If parents believe that their children may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals please contact the office for more details. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that you use it if you qualify. We will help you all we can with your application.

Parent/s must pay in advance for the school meals by registering on ParentPay and keeping their account in credit. Children will not be provided with a school meal unless it is paid for, except those that are entitled to free school meals. If a parent genuinely forgets to pay in advance, the school may grant a debt allowance of **one meal**. However, this debt must be paid the following day and future meals must be paid in advanced before any further meal is provided.

If the debt is not cleared parents must provide a packed lunch. In a case when a debt payment occurs or a packed lunch has not been provided, a member of the administration team will phone the parent to ask them to add credit to their parent pay account or bring a

packed lunch to school.

We hope that by implementing this debt policy we are able to help parents manage school dinner money better and at the same time ensure that all money that is for children's learning is available.

## Letter 1

**This letter should be provided to all parents and carers when their child enters Year 3 and now have to pay for a school meal.**

Dear Parent/Carers,

From April 2018, Chapelford Village Primary School has adopted a clear '**no debt**' policy relating to the school meal service. Previously, the Local Authority would deal with any parent who owes dinner money for their child, however since becoming part of the Omega Academy Trust, if any debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents. Every parent will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents give this policy their full support.

If parents believe that their children may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals please contact the office for more details. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that you use it if you qualify. We will help you all we can with your application and funds received will support a Free School Meal and additional funding to support residential visits, trips and other learning support.

Parent/s must pay in advance for the school meals by registering on ParentPay and keeping their account in credit.

Children will not be provided with a school meal unless it is paid for, except those that are entitled to free school meals. If a parent genuinely forgets to pay in advance, the school may grant a debt allowance of **one meal**. However, this debt must be paid the following day and future meals must be paid in advanced before any further meal is provided.

We hope that by implementing this debt policy we are able to help parents manage school dinner money payments more effectively and support parents in preventing the accumulation of debt and at the same time we will be ensuring that all money, that is for children's learning, is available for this purpose.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Hewson  
Head Teacher

**Letter 2**

Dear Parent/Carers,

Re: School Meals

Your child did not have a credit balance on their ParentPay account today.

As per the School Meals Debt Policy, no further school meals will be provided until your child's dinner account has been cleared.

Please ensure your child is provided with a packed lunch until this debt is cleared and then, school dinners can re-commence.

Parent/s must pay in advance for the school meals by registering on ParentPay and keeping their account in credit.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

The School Office  
Chapelford Village Primary School

Letter 3

Dear Parent/Carers,

Re: School Meal Payments

Child's Name:

School Meal Arrears:

According to our records your child has school meal arrears. As per School Meals Debt Policy, no further school meals will be provided until your child's dinner account is in credit.

Parent/s must pay in advance for the school meals by registering on ParentPay and keeping their account in credit.

Children will not be provided with a school meal unless it is paid for, except those that are entitled to free school meals. If a parent genuinely forgets to pay in advance, the school may grant a debt allowance of 1 meal. However, this debt must be paid next day and future meals must be paid in advanced before any meal is provided.

I would be grateful if payment could be made to ParentPay to clear your child's account by **<insert date>**, including monies for any further school meals required. Thank you.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Hewson  
Head Teacher