

## Delph Side C P School

### Collection of School Meals Money and School Meals Debt – Policy

#### Introduction

This policy concerns to the collection of school meals money and the approach to be taken in the case of debts arising when parents / carers fail to pay for school meals. A copy of this policy is available 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 if the school is to accept pupils having an occasional meal money must be received on the day of the meal.

If debts are incurred, then the **school budget has to pay for this**. As a result, 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, or if the pupil is confirmed as entitled to free school meals. If parents/carers believe that their child(ren) may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals they should contact the County Council. 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 the school informed by the Local Authority.

#### Procedure for Collection of Arrears

It is accepted that on occasion arrears may arise for various reasons e.g. pupils forget their dinner money. However, arrears cannot be allowed to accumulate. The governing body has therefore agreed the following policy where arrears arise.

1. Weekly reminders are sent to parent's via email and/or text message.
2. When a debt reaches £50 or more, the parent/carer will be informed in writing via Seesaw or letter asking for immediate payment or an agreement to set up regular payments (Letter 1 EYS/KS1) or letter 1 (KS2). School informs parents that children will need to bring in a packed lunch from home.

3. Should school not receive payment or a response from parents / carers, school will issue a second letter (Letter 2 either KS1 or KS2) which explains that school will instigate debt recovery proceedings within ten days of the notification.

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## APPENDIX 1

### **Payment Arrears – Letter 1 (EY/KS1)**

Despite weekly reminders, 's account remains in arrears. Up to today, the amount outstanding is:-

School meals: £  
Wraparound childcare: £  
After school club: £

I wish to inform you in writing that we are no longer in a position to allow any further increase to this debt.

I am sure that you will understand our need to protect the school budget and to ensure that school finances are available for educational resources.  
I would ask that you contact the school office, in order to discuss the payment of these arrears.

I look forward to hearing from you in the next few days. Payments may be made using the online system; please contact the office if you require new login details, or alternatively cash may be paid at the school office.

### **Payment Arrears – Letter 1 (KS2)**

Despite weekly reminders, 's account remains in arrears. Up to today, the amount outstanding is:-

School meals: £  
Wraparound childcare: £  
After school club: £

I wish to inform you in writing that we are no longer in a position to allow any further increase to this debt, and would ask that from (date) (child's name) is sent into school with a packed lunch.

I am sure that you will understand our need to protect the school budget and to ensure that school finances are available for educational resources.  
I would ask that you contact the school office, in order to discuss the payment of these arrears.

I look forward to hearing from you in the next few days. Payments may be made using the online system; please contact the office if you require new login details, or alternatively cash may be paid at the school office.

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APPENDIX 2

**Payment Arrears – Letter 2**

Date:

Child's name:

Dear

Our records show that you have not cleared the payment arrears on your child's account, despite previous weekly reminders and requests for payment.

Arrears to date:  
School meals: £  
Wraparound childcare: £  
After school club: £

We would like to work with you in reducing this debt, and would ask that you contact a member of the office team in order to discuss a payment plan, or to make payment for the arrears within ten working days of the date of this letter. Should we not hear from you within this time, these arrears will be subject to LCC debt recovery policy, information on debt policies is available on the school website.

I am obliged to warn you that the debt recovery procedure can result in additional costs and potentially a summons to court.

lease make payment immediately by Cash/Schools Electronic Payment System (ParentPay).

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

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