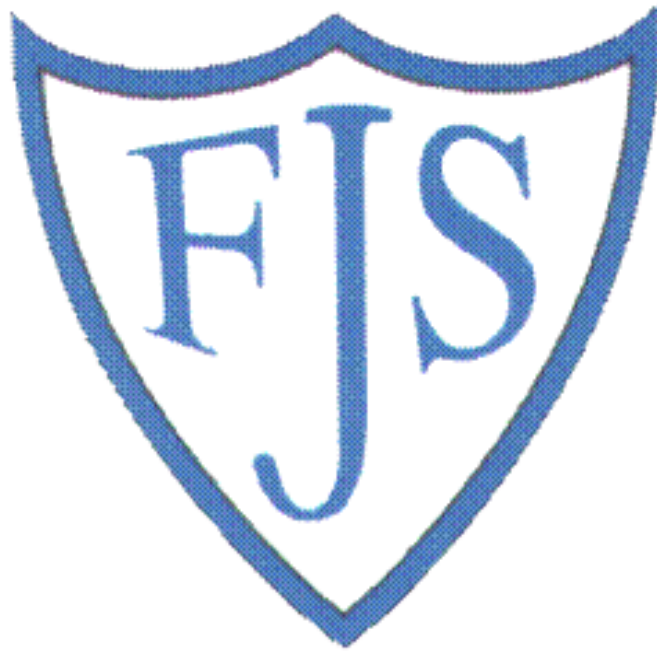


# Forefield Junior School



## School Debt Policy

Meeting where agreed and ratified: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**April 2022**  
**Review 2024**

## Mission Statement

*Forefield Junior School is a P.R.O.U.D. school built on **Passion and Respect**, where **Opportunities** can be seized by **Unique and Determined** learners.*

We are passionate about learning in an environment where everyone is empowered to be themselves and to flourish. We respect and value each and every individual and cherish their unique qualities to create a sense of belonging. We are determined to support personal, social and emotional development by encouraging self-belief and providing opportunities for everyone to express themselves and grow in confidence.

By celebrating their diverse contribution to the life of the school and the wider community, each person will be encouraged to build on their foundations, to instil a belief in everyone that they have limitless potential and are always capable of achieving their best - throughout their lives. As a family we share each other's successes and take pride in them.

We will consistently promote the highest of standards in every aspect of school life, provide a vibrant, stimulating curriculum in a safe and happy learning environment, to foster excellent attitudes and behaviour. The inspirational opportunities we provide will fuel a passion for learning and a sense of pride in all we do.

***This is what makes us PROUD:***

***Passion, Respect, Opportunity, Unique, Determined.***

## School Meals

This policy has been written to help our school adopt a consistent approach to debt incurred by parents whose children take school meals. It provides clarity and consistency in managing the debt and will also help parents clearly understand what is expected of them.

The responsibility of ensuring school meal payments are made by parents lies with the school. Therefore, a policy is required to ensure school meals debts are kept to a minimum. In writing this policy, the Governors of Forefield Junior School wish to implement one that ensures meals are paid for, whilst aiding parents during financial difficulties and ensuring children still receive a meal at lunchtime.

Meals should be paid for in advance or on the day the meal is taken. School meals are charged at £2.45 per day. Parents will be informed of any price increase to school meals, as soon as possible. Payments can be made online via Schoolmoney (our preferred method) or cash can be paid to the school office if access to a computer is not possible.

Children will be asked which lunch option they will have each day. If choosing school meals their lunch account must be in credit.

If a parent forgets to pay in advance, the school will grant a debt allowance of one meal. This debt must be paid no later than the next morning, and a text message will be made on the day advising the parent of the debt. If the debt is not cleared the following day, parents must provide a packed lunch. If no packed lunch is provided there will be a phone call to the parent to ask them to pay the outstanding amount or provide a packed lunch before lunch time.

If the debt has not been paid by the end of the first week then a debt letter will be issued with a statement of the amount owed. If a debt continues to grow, the matter may be

referred to the Local Authority who will use means available to them to recover the debt. This may incur costs to yourself and affect your credit rating.

The child may be eligible to receive free school meals, if the parent is in receipt of the following:

- Income Support
- Income based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit ONLY (not entitled/receiving Working Tax Credit) and have an income of less than £16190.00
- Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for the four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit and have a net household income of less than £7400 per annum
- Support under VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act

Please contact the school office, who can provide you with information and a form to apply for free school meals. The school will encourage parents to make an application for free school meals, whether the child takes school meals or not as the school will receive additional funding known as Pupil Premium.

When a child is leaving it is imperative for the school office to check the balance of the child's account and refund any credit balance and obtain any debt outstanding.

Since schools will be invoiced for meals taken, it is essential that sufficient funds are credited for these meals in the central account as if there are insufficient funds then the school will have to cover the shortfall from their budget.

It is hoped that by implementing this policy unmanageable debt can be avoided and at the same time ensure that all money that is for children's learning is available.

School will aim to recognise any family who may be experiencing financial difficulties and will help and support families according to circumstances.

#### After school clubs

Some afterschool clubs, mainly those provided by an outside agency, do incur costs to parents. Children may only attend if the fees have been paid prior to the start of the club. Clubs are paid on either half-termly or termly basis and parents are advised through a school letter what club is available and the cost per session. Places are secured as long as payment, for the full period, is received in advance with parental consent.

If the club is cancelled for an unforeseen reason (e.g. staff absence or other matters outside school control) a refund for the lost session(s) will be provided if the session cannot be rearranged.

The Governing Body acknowledges that, on occasion, families have financial difficulties and in these proven circumstances, the school will work hard with the family to agree a solution which is not to the detriment of the child.