



# TEMPLEFIELDS MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST (TMAT) SCHOOL DEBT POLICY & PROCEDURE

POLICY FIRST ACCEPTED AND RATIFIED BY THE TRUST	1 April 2019
POLICY LAST REVIEWED	25 March 2022
POLICY TO BE REVIEWED EVERY TWO YEARS OR AS REQUIRED	

Signature:

Robert Smith  
Chair of Trust

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023

## **Introduction**

This policy relates to contributions for Breakfast Club and School Clubs/Music tuition, the only non-voluntary payments the school presently collects. Where appropriate, this debt collection model will be used for any other monies the school wishes to collect in the future, including school trips. Whole school and class trips rely on full voluntary contributions. We ask that parents/carers speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team if you are in financial difficulty and finding it difficult to make the full voluntary contribution. Templefields Multi-Academy Trust Debt Policy will observe the relevant financial regulations and guidance set out in the schools' Financial Regulations and any other legal requirements.

## **School Clubs, including Breakfast club (Lunchtime, before-school and After-school Clubs and Childcare) and Music tuition**

Children may only attend if the fees have been paid in advance. School clubs are paid on either half-termly or termly basis and parents/carers are advised via ParentMail/ParentPay which clubs are available and the cost per session. Places are secured as long as payment, for the full period, is received in advance with the consent form.

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 made or, if possible, an additional session will be added. Music teachers will normally double up any lost sessions due to their absence where possible. Child absence is not refunded.

The Local Governing Bodies acknowledge that, on occasion, families have financial difficulties and in these proven circumstances, the schools will work hard with the family to agree a solution which in not to the detriment of the child.

If a child does not attend a club, for whatever reason, refunds will not be given.

This policy has been written to help our schools adopt a consistent approach to debt incurred by parents/carers. It will be applied to all non-voluntary payments as shown in the introductory paragraph. It provides clarity and consistency in managing the debt and will also help parents/carers clearly understand what is expected of them.

Therefore, a policy is required to ensure school debts are kept to a minimum. In writing this policy, the Local Governing Bodies of Templefields Multi-Academy Trust wish to implement one that ensures extended school clubs/tuition are paid for.

When a child is leaving the school 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.

## **Establishing a debt policy**

Templefields Multi-Academy Trust will ensure that parents/carers are aware of this policy in the following ways:

- A letter to parents/carers by email/ParentMail/ParentPay)
- The school newsletter

- The school prospectus, where to school has one
- The school website

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

### **Debt policy implementation Key Information**

1. All parents/carers are provided with a copy of the debt policy when their child joins the school
2. All school club/tuition must be paid for in advance

#### **Level 1**

Indicator: A child's record shows a debt

Check 1 Is this a FSM child; are dates correct?

Check 2 Is there a possibility that payments have not been recorded correctly?

Check 3 Does this parent/carer normally pay on time; is this just a one off?

**Action 1: send a 'Gentle debt reminder' Appendix A**

Indicator: A child comes to school club/tuition again without the debt being paid

Check 1 Is this a FSM child, are dates correct?

Check 2 Is there a possibility that payments have not been recorded correctly?

Check 3 Has this parent/carer made contact?

**Action 2: Personal contact. Someone will phone the parent/carer to ask them to pay the money owed via ParentMail/ParentPay**

#### **Level 3**

Indicator: The parent consistently does not comply with any of these options,

Check 1 Is this a FSM child; are dates correct?

Check 2 Is there a possibility that payments have not been recorded?

Check 3 Has this parent made contact?

**Action 4: Refer outstanding debt to the school Governors**

**Send payment plan letters Appendix C**

## **APPENDIX A**

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Re: School Club/Tuition Payments**

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

According to our records [name] has school club/tuition arrears. As per the school's No Debt Policy, this must be paid immediately. No further school club/tuition will be provided until your child's account is clear.

I would be grateful if payment could be via ParentMail/ParentPay by \_\_\_\_\_[date], Thank you.

This is a standardised letter that we send out, whenever club money is owed. I would be grateful if you could arrange for prompt payment of this outstanding debt since the school is unable to provide credit for school clubs/tuition.

If payment is not received there is a possibility that the school may not provide clubs/tuition for your child/children as the school may be liable for any debt that arises. Schools cannot provide free club/tuition to children who are not entitled to them.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

## **APPENDIX B**

Date:

Parent or carer of \_\_\_\_\_ [Child's Name]

### **Re: School Club/tuition Payments**

Our records show that you have not paid Club/tuition for your child \_\_\_\_\_ Class:  
\_\_\_\_\_

As at \_\_\_\_\_ [date] our records show a debt of £ \_\_\_\_\_

Please arrange for this money to be paid immediately by logging on to your ParentMail/Parent Pay account and making a payment.

NOTE: All clubs/tuition MUST be paid for in advance in accordance with our debt policy (copy enclosed).

If you have any concerns or questions regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Letter 1**

Date: Dear Parent/Carer,

#### **Re: School Club/Tuition Payments**

I am writing to advise you that there is an outstanding balance of £\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_[child's name] club/tuition account.

It is the policy of Templefields Multi-Academy Trust that the School does not pay for clubs/tuition on behalf of the children. As a result of this, I need to advise you that the school will be unable to provide clubs/tuition for (child's name) until this debt is cleared.

A weekly payment plan to pay the debt would be acceptable, and I would appreciate your co-operation in setting this up. Please note that there is a minimum limit of £2.00 per transaction on ParentMail/ParentPay.

Please ensure..... does not attend clubs/tuition until this debt is cleared and then school club/tuition may re-commence. Thank you for your assistance.

If you wish to discuss this further, then please do not hesitate to contact me. I enclose a copy of the school's Debt Policy and procedures for your information.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher