

# Mereside Primary Academy



## After School and Breakfast Club Policy

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**Review: September 2024**

**Next Review Date: September 2025**

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## Statement of Intent

Mereside Primary Academy aims to provide a high quality and affordable After School and Breakfast club experience for children.

We aim to:

1. Ensure everyone feels valued and respected and has an equal chance to do their best.
2. Help children develop a positive attitude, self-respect and respect for others, and learn to take responsibility for their own actions.
3. Understand and meet children's individual needs, especially those of vulnerable pupils.
4. Ensure all achievements are recognised and celebrated.
5. Create a caring, safe, purposeful and calm environment which promotes children's wellbeing.
6. Develop positive and supportive relationships between children, parents, school and the wider community.

We will support parents to claim benefit entitlement related to After School and Breakfast Club fees such as Working Tax Credits.

This After School and Breakfast Club Fees Policy has been established to provide transparent fee information, set procedures for the payment of fees and create a framework for dealing with non-payment in a swift and fair manner.

Parents should be made aware of and given access to this policy and the school's procedures. It will be included on the school's website and made available to view at the school on request.

## **1. Fees**

- 1.1. Fees are **£ 5.50** per session for children from Reception through to Year 6 for After School Club and **£ 3.00** per session for children from Reception through to Year 6 for Breakfast Club
- 1.2. We require no less than 24hrs notice of cancellation of a session booked for After School and/or Breakfast Club.
- 1.3. Where sessions for After School and/or Breakfast Club have been booked and the child does not attend, then the fees as stated above will still be charged.

## **2. Roles and responsibilities regarding payments collection**

2.1. The School Administrator will:

- Ensure that attendance into After School and Breakfast Club sessions are recorded into MCAS (My Child at School) on a weekly basis.
- Keep a record of any reminder letters or pursuance of debt is recorded including dates and times of both phone calls and/or letters.
- Ensure that the privacy of all correspondence with parents/carers is only made known to those within school who need to know (i.e. the Headteacher, The Business Manager or the Safeguarding Lead)

2.2. The School Business Manager will:

- Review debt on a monthly basis and where no payment of fees have been made, a decision will be made on whether continued access to the provision of After School and/or Breakfast Club will be made.
- Agree a debt payment arrangement with the parent/carer where necessary which will be recorded in a letter and agreed by the parent/carer.
- Advise the parent/carer when resumed access to the After School and/or Breakfast Club will be following settlement of any debt.
- Prescribe and regularly review the arrangements for debt recovery in line with the FCAT Debt Recovery Procedures and where necessary invoke legal action.

## **3. Payment information**

- 3.1. Fees are payable preferably, in advance on Monday morning (or the first day your child attends After School and Breakfast Club) and should be paid through MCAS (My Child at School) (Please ask for details if you do not have these)
- 3.2. Please note, we cannot accept Cash or cheques into school.

- 3.3. One weeks' notice and payment of fees for the notice period will be required to withdraw your child from After School and Breakfast Club if attending on a regular basis for over 1 half term.

## **4. Late collection**

- 4.1. Staffing ratios must be maintained at all times. Please be aware that in our After School Club, the latest collection time for children is 5.30pm.
- 4.2. If a child is collected late, this can lead to staff needing to stay beyond the end of their normal working hours. This incurs a cost which will be passed on to parents at £5.00 for every 15 minutes the parent/carer is late picking up.
- 4.3. As a last resort and only where absolutely necessary and after all attempts to contact a family member has been made, any failure to collect a child without notice will result in support being requested from Children's Social Care in returning the child to the care of the family.

## **5. Difficulty with payments**

- 5.1. Mereside Primary Academy will work with parents to ensure all avenues for assistance with payments are explored. Parents may face financial difficulties and, understandably, would like to ensure as little disruption to their child's care as possible. Parents and carers experiencing such difficulties should contact the School Business Manager as early as possible, to reach a suitable arrangement for both parties.
- 5.2. If a Payment plan is agreed with a parent/carer, the place for After School and/or Breakfast Club will not be stopped, however, if the terms of the agreement is not met, then the places will be withdrawn.

## **6. Debt collection**

- 6.1. The Academy Council has a duty to ensure the school receives all the funds to which it is entitled including After School and Breakfast Club fees.
- 6.2. In line with FCAT Debt Recovery Procedures the following communication will occur for Non-payment of debts:
  - After 1 week – Informal reminder
  - After 1 month - First Formal Reminder Letter
  - If, after 10 weeks from the date of account, the account has still not been settled, legal action will be considered by the CFO and the Academy Headteacher. In

determining whether to pursue legal action to recover the debt, the following will be considered:

- 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;
- Financial impact on the Academy;
- Financial impact on the debtor;
- Potential impact of any precedent set.

If Legal action is considered appropriate, the parent/carer will be informed in writing and that they will be liable for costs and that the debt will be subject to statutory interest from the day it became due.

6.3. If legal action is not pursued, or has been unsuccessful, individual irrecoverable debts may be written off in accordance with the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook as follows:

- Debts of less than £1,000 may be approved for write off by the Academy Headteacher and Chief Executive Officer;
- Debts over £1,000 must be approved for write off by the Board of Directors.
- Where the debt to be written off exceeds any of the following, the Corporate Services Lead must obtain the Education Funding Agency's prior approval:
  - 1% of total annual income (defined as grant income as disclosed in the Trust's last set of audited accounts) or £45,000 (whichever is smaller) per single transaction;
  - Cumulatively, 2.5% or 5% of total annual income in any one financial year.