SCHOOL MEALS DEBT MANAGEMENT POLICY

Managing fairly. Supporting families.
Protecting public funds.



RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL

INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

This policy forms part of the Riverside Bridge School Policy Framework
and should be read alongside any related policies, procedures and guidance.

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

OUR COMMITMENT

At Riverside Bridge School, every policy reflects our commitment to creating a safe, inclusive and ambitious school community in which every pupil is valued, every voice matters and every family is respected and supported.

Our policies translate our values into consistent practice. They support high expectations, clear responsibilities, effective partnership and informed decision-making, ensuring that the needs, rights, wellbeing and future outcomes of our pupils remain at the heart of our work.

We work collaboratively, act with integrity and continually reflect upon and improve our practice to achieve the best possible outcomes for every pupil.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

Our Policy Principles underpin how we work together and guide the decisions and actions we take to support every pupil and their families.



POLICY PURPOSE & FRAMEWORK

Riverside Bridge School policies set out the expectations, responsibilities and approaches that support safe, consistent and high-quality practice across the school. They translate our values, statutory responsibilities and professional expectations into clear guidance for everyday decision-making and practice.

Each policy forms part of the Riverside Bridge School Policy Framework and should be read alongside any related policies, procedures, statutory guidance and school frameworks referenced within the document.

Policies apply to the members of the school community identified within each document, including staff, governors, parents and carers, volunteers, contractors and other professionals where relevant. Everyone is expected to understand and apply the requirements appropriate to their role and to seek further guidance where clarification is required.

CURRICULUM DRIVERS



Our Drivers provide a shared golden thread across curriculum, school life, policy and leadership, helping ensure that our decisions and practice remain focused on the experiences and futures we want for every pupil.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This policy sets out Riverside Bridge School's approach to the payment of chargeable school meals and the management of outstanding meal debt. It establishes the principles, responsibilities and arrangements through which the school seeks to prevent debt from arising, respond promptly where balances become outstanding and recover public funds fairly and proportionately.

Riverside Bridge School recognises that access to an appropriate meal during the school day supports pupils' health, wellbeing, learning and participation. The school also has a responsibility to ensure that chargeable services are paid for and that public money is managed responsibly.

These responsibilities must be balanced carefully. Meal debt will therefore be managed through early communication, clear expectations and proportionate escalation, with appropriate consideration given to financial hardship, safeguarding, disability, medical need and other individual circumstances.

The school recognises that financial difficulties may arise unexpectedly and that unpaid meal charges can sometimes be an indication of wider family need. Parents and carers will be encouraged to contact the school as early as possible where difficulties arise so that available support can be explored before debt becomes unmanageable.

Riverside Bridge School will support families to establish whether pupils are entitled to Free School Meals or other relevant assistance. From the start of the 2026–27 academic year, benefits-based Free School Meal eligibility has expanded to children in households receiving Universal Credit, subject to a claim being made and eligibility being verified. Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils also retain their Universal Infant Free School Meal entitlement.

As Riverside Bridge School includes sixth-form provision, eligible post-16 pupils will also be supported to access the applicable free-meals arrangements. DfE guidance for 2026–27 confirms that maintained schools and academy sixth forms must provide free meals to eligible disadvantaged students and that the expanded Universal Credit entitlement also applies to eligible post-16 learners.

Meal debt is the responsibility of the parent or carer liable for the charge. Pupils will not be asked to discuss debt, used to convey debt messages, embarrassed because of an outstanding balance or made to feel responsible for their family's financial circumstances.

Where chargeable meal provision is withdrawn because debt remains unresolved, this will only occur after appropriate communication and consideration of the pupil's circumstances. A statutory entitlement to a free meal will never be withdrawn because of debt relating to another period, sibling, account or chargeable service.

Where medical, allergy, dysphagia, specialist feeding or other individual needs mean that ordinary packed-lunch arrangements would be unsafe or inappropriate, the school will consider reasonable alternative arrangements while continuing to address the outstanding debt with the parent or carer.

Our responsibilities to pupils and families

Riverside Bridge School will communicate meal charges and payment arrangements clearly, monitor outstanding balances consistently and contact families promptly where debt begins to arise.

We will work sensitively with families experiencing difficulty, consider realistic repayment arrangements where appropriate and provide information or support in relation to Free School Meals and other available assistance.

Where financial hardship raises concern about a child's welfare or wider family circumstances, the matter will be considered through the school's safeguarding and family-support arrangements rather than being treated solely as a financial issue.

The school will also ensure that income due for chargeable meals is managed responsibly and that any escalation, recovery or write-off of debt is undertaken within Partnership Learning's Financial Regulations and Scheme of Financial Delegation.

Through these arrangements, Riverside Bridge School aims to prevent avoidable debt, resolve outstanding balances fairly and consistently, protect pupils from the consequences of adult financial disputes and maintain responsible stewardship of public funds.

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APPROVED BY: Governing Board

APPROVED ON: September 2026

REVIEWED DUE ON: September 2027

Section 01

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Setting expectations. Defining responsibilities. Managing debt consistently.

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear, fair and consistent framework for the payment of chargeable school meals and the management of outstanding meal debt at Riverside Bridge School.

The policy aims to prevent debt from escalating by ensuring that payment expectations are understood, account balances are monitored and families are contacted at an early stage where payment has not been received.

It also establishes how the school will balance its duty to safeguard public funds with its commitment to supporting pupils and families.

The policy seeks to:

- ensure that charges and payment arrangements are clear and transparent;
- promote payment in advance for chargeable school meals;
- identify outstanding balances promptly;
- provide families with appropriate opportunities to resolve debt;
- support families experiencing genuine financial hardship;
- maximise access to Free School Meal entitlements;
- protect pupils from involvement in debt-recovery conversations;
- ensure that safeguarding concerns are recognised and acted upon;
- apply escalation and recovery arrangements consistently and proportionately;
- ensure that any write-off or formal recovery of debt takes place within authorised financial arrangements.

This policy applies to parents and carers who are responsible for paying for chargeable school meals provided to pupils at Riverside Bridge School.

It also applies to school staff who administer meal accounts, communicate with families, agree repayment arrangements, authorise escalation, monitor income or undertake debt recovery.

The policy covers school meal debt only. Other school charges are governed through the Charging and Remissions Policy and relevant financial procedures.

A pupil who has a statutory entitlement to a free school meal is outside the chargeable meal arrangements for the period during which that entitlement applies. Such entitlement must not be withheld because another debt is outstanding.

The policy does not replace the school's wider safeguarding, financial-support, equality or complaints arrangements. Where those considerations arise, the relevant policies will operate alongside this one.

Section 02

PRINCIPLES

Acting fairly. Supporting families. Protecting pupils and public funds.

Riverside Bridge School will manage school meal payments in a way that is financially responsible, consistent and respectful. The school recognises that there is a legitimate expectation that chargeable school meals are paid for. At the same time, debt management should not result in pupils being stigmatised or families experiencing unnecessary humiliation or distress. The following principles will therefore guide practice.

Payment responsibility

Where a school meal is chargeable, the parent or carer responsible for the meal account is expected to ensure that sufficient funds are available. Chargeable meals should normally be paid for in advance through the school's approved payment arrangements.

Early intervention

Small outstanding balances are generally easier to resolve than accumulated debt. Meal accounts will therefore be monitored and families contacted promptly where balances become outstanding. Early contact should be supportive and factual rather than punitive.

The pupil is not responsible for the debt

Any outstanding balance is a matter between the school and the responsible parent or carer. Pupils will not:

- be asked to remind parents about debt;
- be questioned about unpaid balances;
- be refused a statutory free-meal entitlement;
- be publicly identified as owing money;
- be treated differently because of family debt;
- be placed in a position where financial circumstances become a source of embarrassment.

Support before escalation

Where a family indicates that financial difficulty is affecting their ability to pay, the school will consider appropriate support before moving immediately to formal recovery. This may include checking Free School Meal eligibility, agreeing a repayment plan or signposting to relevant support. Support does not automatically remove liability for an existing chargeable debt.

Proportionality

The level and speed of escalation will reflect the circumstances. Factors may include:

- the amount outstanding;
- how long the debt has existed;
- previous contact with the family;
- whether the debt continues to increase;
- whether a repayment agreement is being followed;
- evidence of financial hardship;
- safeguarding concerns;
- relevant medical, disability or dietary needs.

Consistency

Families in comparable circumstances should normally be treated consistently. However, equality does not require identical treatment where individual circumstances justify a different approach.

Protection of public funds

The school has a responsibility to pursue legitimate debts and maintain accurate financial records. Debt must not simply be allowed to accumulate indefinitely because recovery is difficult. Any decision to waive, reduce or write off a debt must be made only within the authority provided by Partnership Learning's Financial Regulations and Scheme of Financial Delegation.

Section 03

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Clarifying accountability. Monitoring balances. Escalating appropriately.

Effective meal-debt management depends upon clear responsibilities and accurate communication between school leadership, finance staff, families and other relevant teams.

The Governing Board provides strategic oversight and assurance. It will:

- approve this policy;
- receive appropriate assurance that meal debt is being managed consistently;
- ensure arrangements protect public funds while taking appropriate account of pupil welfare and equality;
- monitor significant or recurring issues where appropriate;
- ensure that write-off and debt-recovery arrangements operate within the Trust's financial governance framework.

The Governing Board will not ordinarily become involved in individual routine debt cases unless this falls within its delegated financial responsibilities or a complaint or significant governance issue arises.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that the policy is implemented effectively.
The Headteacher will:

- ensure appropriate systems are in place for monitoring meal income and debt;
- ensure responsibilities for administration and recovery are clearly allocated;
- consider exceptional or escalated cases where required;
- ensure safeguarding and equality considerations are integrated into debt-management decisions;
- authorise actions only within the Headteacher's delegated financial authority;
- escalate matters to the Trust or Governing Board where required by financial regulations.

The school's designated finance staff are responsible for the day-to-day administration of meal accounts.
Their responsibilities include:

- monitoring account balances;
- recording payments accurately;
- issuing routine reminders;
- contacting parents and carers regarding outstanding balances;
- maintaining appropriate records of communication;

- supporting families to understand payment arrangements;
- signposting or supporting FSM checks where appropriate;
- administering agreed repayment arrangements;
- escalating unresolved debt in accordance with this policy;
- maintaining information required for financial monitoring and audit.

Relevant senior leaders may become involved where:

- routine debt-management stages have not resolved the matter;
- debt is significant or increasing;
- a repayment arrangement requires higher-level approval;
- there are concerns about hardship or safeguarding;
- withdrawal of chargeable meal provision is being considered;
- formal recovery action may be necessary.

The Safeguarding Team and relevant family-support staff do not act as debt collectors.
Their role is to consider whether information arising from meal debt indicates unmet need, financial hardship, neglect, food insecurity or another concern affecting the welfare of the pupil or family.
Where appropriate, they may support engagement, signposting or multi-agency working while financial staff continue to manage the debt itself.

Parents and carers responsible for chargeable meals are expected to:

- maintain sufficient credit for meals;
- monitor their child's meal account;
- respond to school communications;
- inform the school promptly where there is a payment issue;
- provide accurate information for FSM eligibility checks where requested;
- comply with any agreed repayment arrangement;
- contact the school if their circumstances change.

Early communication will normally provide more options for resolving difficulty than allowing debt to increase without contact.

Section 04

PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Paying promptly. Communicating clearly. Preventing debt.

Chargeable school meals should normally be paid for in advance using the school's approved payment system. Parents and carers may make payments at intervals that suit their circumstances, provided that sufficient funds remain available to meet the cost of meals taken. This may include payment:

- daily;
- weekly;
- monthly;
- half-termly;
- termly;
- through another arrangement agreed with the school.

The school will communicate the current meal price and the method by which payment should be made. Where charges are changed, families will be given reasonable notice before the revised charge takes effect.

Monitoring meal accounts

Families are encouraged to monitor balances regularly through the available parent payment system. The school will also monitor account balances and should not rely solely on parents identifying that an account has fallen into debt. Where technical or administrative problems affect a family's ability to access the online system, appropriate assistance or an alternative approved payment arrangement will be considered.

New pupils

Information regarding meal arrangements, entitlement and payment will be provided as part of the pupil's admission arrangements. Where eligibility for a free meal is awaiting confirmation, the school will take a reasonable and proportionate approach while verification is completed. DfE advised settings during summer 2026 to continue providing free meals to pupils already receiving them where eligibility rechecks remained outstanding at the start of the academic year, in order to avoid unnecessary disruption while checks were completed.

Pupils leaving the school

When a pupil leaves Riverside Bridge School, the account will be reviewed. Where there is a credit balance, arrangements will be made for refund or transfer in accordance with the school's financial procedures.

Any outstanding debt will continue to be pursued in accordance with this policy and relevant financial procedures. Leaving the school does not automatically extinguish a legitimate debt.

Account accuracy and disputes

Parents and carers should raise concerns promptly if they believe a meal account is inaccurate.

The school will investigate disputed transactions and provide relevant account information where appropriate. Debt-recovery escalation should normally be paused in relation to the genuinely disputed amount while the school establishes whether the charge is correct. This does not prevent recovery of other undisputed balances.

Section 05

FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Checking entitlement. Supporting access. Removing financial barriers.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to ensuring that pupils and students who are entitled to free meals receive that entitlement. Free School Meal entitlement is not discretionary school financial assistance. Where the statutory eligibility requirements are met, the pupil or student is entitled to the relevant provision.

Benefits-based Free School Meals

From the beginning of the 2026-27 academic year, benefits-based FSM eligibility in England has expanded to all children from households receiving Universal Credit, regardless of household earnings. A claim must still be made and eligibility verified by the school or Local Authority. The 2026-27 system distinguishes between:

- targeted FSM, broadly retaining the previous Universal Credit earnings threshold for funding purposes; and
- expanded FSM, covering additional children in households receiving Universal Credit who do not fall within the targeted category.

Both categories confer entitlement to a free meal once eligibility has been appropriately established. The funding categories should not affect how eligible pupils are treated in school.

Universal Infant Free School Meals

All pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 in state-funded schools remain entitled to Universal Infant Free School Meals. Families may still be encouraged to complete relevant benefits-based FSM applications where appropriate because entitlement information can affect other school funding and support arrangements.

Sixth-form pupils

Riverside Bridge School's post-16 provision must also be considered. DfE guidance confirms that maintained schools and academy sixth forms are required to provide free meals to eligible disadvantaged post-16 students. The 2026–27 Universal Credit expansion also applies within the relevant post-16 free-meals arrangements. The school will apply the current eligibility and funding rules appropriate to the pupil's age and provision.

Supporting applications

The school will promote awareness of FSM eligibility and support families to make or verify claims where appropriate.

This may include requesting information necessary for eligibility checking, providing guidance about the process and periodically reminding families that changes in circumstances may affect entitlement. Information gathered for FSM checking will be handled in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy and relevant privacy information.

Pupil Premium and FSM

The school will avoid stating that every successful FSM application automatically creates the same Pupil Premium entitlement. The 2026 expansion grant is distinct from the existing Pupil Premium and National Funding Formula arrangements. DfE specifically states that the FSM expansion grant does not alter Pupil Premium allocations in 2026-27. Families may nevertheless be encouraged to complete entitlement processes because accurate eligibility information supports access to appropriate meals and may be relevant to other funding or support.

Debt and FSM entitlement

A pupil's current statutory free-meal entitlement must not be withdrawn because:

- a historic meal debt exists;
- a sibling has an outstanding balance;
- another school charge is unpaid;
- a parent is in dispute with the school about a separate financial matter.

Where a child becomes eligible for FSM while an earlier chargeable-meal debt remains outstanding, the entitlement will apply from the relevant date. The earlier debt may continue to be pursued separately.

Section 06

MANAGING OUTSTANDING MEAL DEBT

Intervening early. Resolving proportionately. Recovering responsibly.

Riverside Bridge School aims to resolve meal debt at the earliest reasonable opportunity.
The school will normally use a staged approach so that families receive repeated opportunities to engage before formal recovery action is considered. The stages are not intended to create an inflexible timetable. The school may move more quickly or slowly where the amount involved, family communication, safeguarding concerns or other circumstances justify this.

Stage 1 - Initial reminder

When an account first becomes overdrawn, a friendly reminder will normally be issued.
The communication will:

- identify the outstanding balance;
- ask for the account to be brought up to date;
- explain how payment can be made;
- invite the parent or carer to make contact if there is a difficulty.

The purpose of Stage 1 is early resolution rather than escalation.

Stage 2 - Direct contact and support check

Where the balance remains outstanding or continues to increase, designated finance staff will make further contact. The school will seek to establish whether:

- the family is aware of the debt;
- there is a technical or account problem;
- financial difficulty is affecting payment;
- the pupil may be eligible for FSM;
- there is another form of assistance that may be relevant;
- there is a dispute about the accuracy of the account.

The parent or carer will be asked to clear the balance or agree how it will be resolved.

Stage 3 - Repayment arrangement

Where the parent or carer cannot reasonably clear the balance immediately, the school may agree a repayment arrangement. The amount and duration should be realistic while ensuring that debt is progressively reduced. Where chargeable meals continue to be taken during the repayment period, the arrangement should normally address both the existing debt and the cost of current meals so

that the total balance does not continue to rise. Repayment agreements should be recorded. Failure to maintain an arrangement without contacting the school may result in escalation to the next stage.

Stage 4 - Senior review

Where there has been little or no engagement, an agreed repayment plan has not been maintained or the balance continues to increase, the case will be reviewed by the Headteacher or another appropriately authorised senior leader. The review should consider:

- the total balance;
- previous communications;
- whether the family has engaged;
- whether FSM eligibility has been checked;
- whether hardship is known or suspected;
- whether there are safeguarding or family-support concerns;
- whether the pupil has medical or specialist dietary needs;
- whether continued chargeable meal provision is appropriate;
- the next proportionate financial action.

The family may be invited to a meeting or contacted directly to agree a final resolution.

Stage 5 - Safeguarding or family-support consideration

Where there is evidence that unpaid meal charges may reflect significant hardship, food insecurity, neglect or another concern affecting the pupil's wellbeing, appropriate safeguarding or family-support staff will be consulted. This is not a debt-recovery sanction. The purpose is to ensure that any underlying needs are considered and appropriate action taken. Financial recovery and safeguarding responses will remain distinct but coordinated where necessary.

Stage 6 - Restriction of further chargeable meals

Where:

- the pupil has no statutory entitlement to a free meal;
- the debt remains unresolved;
- reasonable opportunities to engage have been provided;
- there is no adequate repayment arrangement;
- relevant welfare, medical and equality considerations have been reviewed,

the school may decide that further chargeable school meals will no longer be provided until the account is brought up to date or another arrangement has been agreed. Parents and carers will normally be given

reasonable notice and will be required to provide an appropriate packed lunch. The pupil will not be informed of this as a punishment or debt consequence in front of peers.

Pupils for whom a packed lunch is not a straightforward alternative

The school recognises that, particularly at Riverside Bridge School, a requirement to provide a packed lunch may not be safe or practicable for every pupil. Where a pupil has:

- an allergy;
- dysphagia;
- a prescribed texture-modified diet;
- specialist feeding arrangements;
- a medical condition;
- a significant sensory or selective-eating need;
- a disability affecting food access or preparation;
- another relevant assessed need,

the school will consider what arrangement is necessary to protect the pupil's health, safety and access to education. Any continuation or alternative provision made for this purpose does **not** cancel the underlying debt or remove the parent or carer's responsibility to resolve it. The pupil's professionally agreed eating and drinking or medical plan will continue to be followed.

Stage 7 - Formal debt recovery

Where reasonable attempts to secure payment have been unsuccessful, the school may consider formal recovery action in accordance with Partnership Learning's financial procedures. This may include referral through the Trust's approved debt-recovery route. Any recovery action must be proportionate to the debt and take account of the costs and likely effectiveness of recovery. The school will not independently adopt debt-recovery methods outside authorised Trust arrangements.

Debt write-off

A debt may only be written off where the appropriate authority exists under the Partnership Learning Financial Regulations and Scheme of Financial Delegation. Staff must not inform a parent or carer that a debt has been waived unless formal authorisation has been obtained. Write-off should be regarded as an accounting and governance decision, not as an informal alternative to pursuing debt. Records of authorised write-offs will be maintained in accordance with financial and audit requirements.

The school will normally allow approximately five school days between routine escalation stages, although this may be shortened or extended according to the value of the debt, family engagement, agreed repayment arrangements, school holidays, safeguarding considerations or other relevant circumstances.

Section 07

SAFEGUARDING AND FAMILY SUPPORT

Recognising hardship. Protecting welfare. Connecting support.

Riverside Bridge School recognises that meal debt may arise for many reasons and does not, by itself, constitute a safeguarding concern. However, persistent inability to provide or pay for food may sometimes form part of a wider picture of financial hardship, food insecurity, neglect or unmet family need. Staff should remain professionally curious where information suggests that a pupil's welfare may be affected. Possible indicators may include:

- repeated inability to provide food where chargeable meal provision has ceased;
- a pupil regularly presenting as hungry;
- disclosures relating to lack of food at home;
- significant and unexplained changes in family circumstances;
- repeated financial concerns across different areas of school;
- concerns about neglect or basic care;
- other information that, when considered together, raises a safeguarding concern.

The school may respond by:

- checking FSM eligibility;
- providing information about relevant local or national support;
- involving family-support staff where appropriate;
- consulting the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- working with Early Help or other agencies where appropriate;
- making a safeguarding referral where the statutory threshold is met.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, rather than finance staff, will determine safeguarding action in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Debt must not be treated as evidence of neglect without consideration of the wider circumstances. Equally, concern about appearing judgemental should not prevent the school from acting where there is genuine evidence that a child may be at risk.

Confidentiality and dignity

Information about financial hardship and debt will be shared only with staff who need it for legitimate financial, safeguarding or support purposes. Conversations with families will take place discreetly. Pupils will not be used as intermediaries in debt communications. Where families require communication adjustments because of disability, language, literacy or other need, the school will make reasonable efforts to ensure that information is accessible.

Section 08

EQUALITY, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Applying fairly. Monitoring practice. Strengthening arrangements.

Equality

Riverside Bridge School will implement this policy in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and its wider commitment to inclusion. Debt-management decisions will not discriminate unlawfully because of disability, race, religion or belief, sex or another protected characteristic. Reasonable adjustments will be considered where a parent, carer or pupil has a disability that affects access to payment systems, communication or the practical arrangements for meals.

The school will also take account of pupils' individual medical, dietary, cultural and religious requirements where these are relevant to meal provision. Applying the policy fairly does not mean that every case must be treated identically. A different approach may be justified where individual circumstances materially affect what is reasonable and safe.

Monitoring meal debt

Designated finance staff will monitor outstanding meal balances as part of routine financial administration. Monitoring should enable the school to identify:

- new debts;
- increasing balances;
- repeated arrears;
- repayment arrangements;
- unresolved disputes;
- debts associated with pupils leaving school;
- cases requiring escalation.

The Headteacher will receive appropriate information regarding significant or persistent debt.

Financial oversight

Meal debt will be managed in accordance with Partnership Learning's financial controls. Where appropriate, monitoring will consider:

- overall outstanding debt;
- aged debt;
- recovery activity;
- repayment arrangements;
- amounts recovered;

- debts referred for formal recovery;
- authorised write-offs.

This provides assurance that public funds are being managed appropriately without requiring the Governing Board to review individual routine family circumstances.

Policy compliance

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the policy is applied consistently. Where monitoring identifies recurring difficulties - for example, delays in identifying debt, poor communication, repeated system issues or inconsistent escalation - processes will be reviewed and improved.

The Governing Board will receive appropriate assurance that:

- meal-debt procedures are operating effectively;
- families are treated fairly;
- pupils are protected from inappropriate involvement in debt recovery;
- statutory free-meal entitlements are maintained;
- outstanding debt is being actively managed;
- write-offs and formal recovery are handled within delegated financial authority.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where there are significant changes to:

- free-meal eligibility;
- school-meal arrangements;
- Partnership Learning financial procedures;
- payment systems;
- statutory guidance;
- relevant school structures.

Operational debt letters, account reminders, payment-system instructions and internal escalation forms may be updated independently of the policy, provided that they remain consistent with its principles.

Section 09

RELATED POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS

Connecting practice. Strengthening consistency.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Food and Drink Policy
- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Partnership Learning Financial Regulations
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Medical Needs, Medication and Allergy Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Data Retention Policy
- Complaints Policy
- relevant Free School Meal procedures and guidance
- school meal payment and debt-recovery procedures

Operational materials supporting this policy may include:

- payment instructions;
- account-balance reminders;
- staged debt letters;
- repayment-plan records;
- FSM eligibility-checking arrangements;
- formal debt-recovery correspondence;
- write-off documentation required under Trust financial procedures.