



Debt Policy

Date written: September 2014
Author: Emily Keegan
Date adopted by Governors: 21 October 2014
Reviewed: May 2017
Next Review Date: May 2018

Policy Amendments:

Review Date	Detail
May 2016	No change
May 2017	No change

If debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents/carers. Every parent/carer will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents give this policy their full support.

If parents/carers believe that their child may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals please contact the office for more details. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that you use it if you qualify. If needed we will help you with your application.

To ensure the smooth running of arranging school dinners and subsequent payments the school has set out what is expected of the parents/carers.

Parents/carers must pay in advance for the school lunch using any of the methods of payment outlined below:

- **Send cash** – in a marked envelope with child's full name on
- **Send a cheque** – payable to Sunnyside Academy in a marked envelope with the child's full name written on the reverse of the cheque
- **Pay via parentpay**
- **Price of school dinners** – currently £9.50 weekly / Daily rate £1.90. The price of a school meal is set by the Local Authority usually at the start of an academic year. We will inform parents when there is a change in rate
- **Payments must be in advance of school dinners being provided** – but if for some unavoidable reason this is not possible please contact the school office. If a child is absent e.g. through illness for a period when dinner money has been paid, a credit will be carried forward for when the child returns to school
- **Collection day for dinner money is MONDAY** (or the first day of the school week) – this must be adhered to, to ensure the remainder of the week is not disrupted by late payments. It is important that dinner money collection should be restricted to a particular day and paid for in advance as it assists with the financial book keeping of the school and ensures the kitchen staff are aware in advance of the correct amount of school dinners
- **No child** should be sent to school with no money and expect to be given a meal
- **Parents/carers who do not want their child to have a school lunch** should provide a healthy packed lunch

Children will not be provided with a school lunch unless it is paid for, except those that are entitled to free school meals. If a parent/carer genuinely forgets to pay in advance, the school may grant a debt allowance of 1 meal if this has been agreed in advance. However this debt must be paid before any further meals are given and future meals must be paid in advance before any meal is provided.

Debt Procedures

If the debt is not cleared, parents/carers must either provide a packed lunch. In a case when a debt payment is not received nor a packed lunch provided, the school office will phone the parent/carer to ask them to come to school with the money to pay immediately or a packed lunch.

We hope that by implementing this debt policy we are able to help parents/carers manage school dinner money better and at the same time ensure that all money that is for children's learning is available.

The limit of £19.00 for arrears is set. When the arrears for dinner money for a child exceed £19.00 the action is to immediately suspend any further school dinners for that child. This will result in the parent having to make alternative arrangements for the child's dinner such as providing them with a packed lunch.

If the system is operated as instructed i.e. payments in advance there should be no arrears – accept in an emergency situation.

- 1.0 If payment of the debt is not received, the Head Teacher reserves the right to begin legal proceedings against parents to recover the debt and ask you to attend a meeting to discuss the matter.