



## **School Meal Debt Policy**

Policy to be reviewed every 3 years  
Reviewed by Spring 2021 by A Holland & K Woods Feb 2021  
Next review date: Spring 2024

## **School Meals Debt Policy for Parents and Carers**

All school meals at the school are provided by Leicestershire School Food Support.

Parents/carers are required to pay in advance for school meals through their child's dinner money account on Parentpay. We no longer accept cash or cheque for payment of school dinners.

### **Parentpay**

Parents/carers can set up an alert on Parentpay, so that if the balance on the dinner money account falls below a threshold set by you an email will be sent.

Please follow the instructions below to enable this to be done:

- Log into Parentpay
- Select Communications from the top of the screen
- Select Alert Settings
- Scroll down to Balance Alerts / choose your threshold for an email to be sent
- ( please note you have to pay for text alerts if you want this option )

Parentpay also gives you the option to set up Bank Transfer. This enables payment of items directly from your bank account and it is guaranteed by the Direct Debit service. Details on how to set this up are available on Parentpay.

If a parent/carer forgets to pay in advance the school will grant a debt allowance of one day and the School Business Manager will send you an email advising you that your child's account is in debt and to ask for this to be cleared.

The school can not allow debt of more than one day. If the parent/carer is unable to pay the debt that day then please advise the School Business Manager to agree a way forward.

If the debt is not cleared and / or you have not contacted the School Business Manager we require you to provide your child with a packed lunch until you are able to clear the debt or arrangements have been made with the School Business Manager.

If the amount of the debt increases then the Headteacher reserves the right to begin legal proceedings against parents/carers to recover the debt. Social services may also be informed that these parents/carers are not carrying out the responsibility of care by not providing food for their children at lunchtime.

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## **Universal Free School Meals**

Currently the government fund school dinners for children in Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2. This is known as **Universal Free School Meals**.

## **Free School Meals**

Some parents will also qualify for Free School Meals, details below :

### **Criteria for Free School Meals**

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

If you would like to enquire as to whether you qualify please contact School Food Support on 0116 3055417 to go through the application or contact the School Business Manager for an application form. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that you use it if you qualify. You will also get other benefits from this, for example, school trips funded, uniform voucher each academic year, carton of milk in school.

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.

If you have any concerns please contact the Headteacher or School Business Manager.

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