



School Meal Debt Policy

*“If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, nothing will be impossible to you.”
(Matthew, 17:20)*

GDPR

Data will be processed to be in line with the requirements and protections set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation.

Policy to be reviewed every 3 years
Reviewed by A Holland 15/01/2024
Reviewed by Governors: J Hall 04/02/2024
Next review date: Spring 2027

School Meals Debt Policy for Parents and Carers

All school meals at the school are provided by Coombs Catering.

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. ***(Please see appendix 1)***

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 or text 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 clear 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.

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 – benefits related

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 apply via the Parent Portal on Leicestershire County Councils website. The link to this is below but is also available on the schools website under the School Dinners section.

Parent Portal : <https://leicestershire.cloud.servelec-synergy.com/Synergy/>

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.

For the financial year 2023 – 2024 you will also receive vouchers to cover school dinners for your child during the school holidays from Leicestershire County Council.

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.

Appendix 1

Parentpay

As St Bartholomew's is a cash free school we ask all parents to register with Parentpay. This will enable you to give consent for any trips that your child may go on, pay for school dinners, etc

When your child joins the school you will receive an email from Parentpay with details on how to set up / activate your account. If you have a Parentpay account already then the email will give you details on how to 'add a child' to your existing account.

This email is sent to the parent that we have down as Priority 1 on the school system. If you would like another account activated for your child for your Priority 2 contact then please contact the school office so we can set this up for you.

School Dinner Balance Alert

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.

When you are logged onto Parentpay 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