

MANOR ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL



**COLLECTION OF SCHOOL  
MEALS MONEY AND  
SCHOOL MEALS DEBT  
POLICY**

**January 2024**





**Manor Road Primary School**

**Collection of School Meals Money and School Meals Debt Policy**

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## **Manor Road Primary School**

### **Collection of School Meals Money and School Meals Debt Policy**

#### **Introduction**

This policy concerns the collection of school meals money and the approach to be taken in the case of debts arising when parents/carers fail to pay for school meals. This policy will be published on the school website and parents/carers advised of the policy when their children start at Manor Road and through periodic reminders on the newsletter.

#### **General Principle**

School meals must be paid for in advance using +Pay on ParentMail. Payment by cash or cheque cannot be accepted. If a child is to have meals for the duration of the week monies must be received before the start of that week or as we accept children having an occasional meal, monies must be received on the day of the meal.

If debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on all children's education in school is used to pay for debts incurred by individual parents / carers. The governing body see this as unacceptable and request that all parents / carers give this policy their full support.

#### **Free School Meals Entitlement**

Children in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 receive Universal Free School Meals.

Children in Key Stage 2 will not be provided with a school meal unless it is paid for, except those confirmed as entitled to Free School Meals. If parents/carers believe that their child(ren) may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals they should contact the County Council. As this allowance is a statutory right for qualifying children it is important that parents/carers make use of it. The school is only allowed to provide free school meals to children where this is officially approved and school is informed by the Local Authority.

#### **Procedure for Collection of Arrears**

It is accepted that on occasion arrears may arise for various reasons, eg. a parent genuinely forgets to pay or is temporarily unable to pay promptly, or a child forgets their packed lunch and school is unable to contact the parent in time. However, arrears cannot be allowed to accumulate. The governing body has therefore agreed the following policy where arrears arise.

A daily reminder we be sent via Parentmail to any parent whose dinner money accounts are showing as a minus sum.

Should the reminders not prompt payment a gentle reminder letter will be sent via Parentmail after one week of accumulated arrears (see Appendix 1).

A second letter will be sent via Parentmail if the arrears still have not been cleared after two weeks. This will state that with immediate effect no further school meals will be provided for their child(ren) and the debt must be cleared within five working days (see Appendix 2).

A final letter will be issued via Parentmail after three weeks if the arrears have still not been cleared. This letter informs the parent/guardian that once the final five working day deadline has expired the debt will be passed onto the Debt Recovery Team at Lancashire County Council where legal proceedings may begin (see Appendix 3).

<b>POLICY REVIEW DETAILS</b>		
Policy written by	Karen Marshall	
Policy implemented	February 2016	
Policy reviewed	February 2021	Amendments in line with new school procedures  Moved on to new policy format
	January 2024	Amendments to timescales and delivery of letters to parents via ParentMail
Review schedule	As required	



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Gentle Reminder Letter**

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent/ Guardian

According to our records your school meals payments are in arrears. The debt amounts to £\_\_\_\_\_.

Please settle this amount as soon as possible by making payment on +Pay via ParentMail.

Our Collection of School Meals Money and School Meals Debt Policy is published on the school website in both the 'Policies' and 'School Lunches' sections. A paper copy of this document can be made available on request.

Information on who is eligible for Free School Meals is available at:

<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/help-with-school-costs/free-school-meals.aspx>. Parents claiming Free School Meals for the first time should telephone the Area Education Office on 01772 531809. If you would like assistance with this, please contact the school office. Parents should note that Free School Meals are only awarded from the date of application and therefore the outstanding debt to school must still be paid.

If you have any queries, please contact the school office.

Kind regards

KAREN MARSHALL  
Headteacher



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Accumulated School Meals Money Arrears**

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent/ Guardian

Following our letter dated \_\_\_\_\_ regarding outstanding school dinner money, our records show that this has not been paid.

The amount of arrears is now £\_\_\_\_\_.

If this debt is not cleared immediately, you must provide a daily packed lunch for your child from this point until the debit is cleared. If the debt payment is not received nor a packed lunch provided, we will phone to ask you to come to school with the outstanding arrears or to provide sandwiches before lunch time. Please note, no further school meals will be provided until this debt is cleared. Parents cannot send in payment for specific days unless arrears are cleared.

This debt needs to be paid within five working days, by making payment on +Pay via ParentMail.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss this matter, please contact the school office.

Kind regards

KAREN MARSHALL  
Headteacher



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Non Payment of School Meals Money Arrears.**

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent/ Guardian

Our records show that you have not cleared the school dinner money arrears for your child(ren) despite previous letters sent via Parentmail on \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Arrears to date total £\_\_\_\_\_

In line with the school policy on dinner money arrears, a copy of which is published on the school website, I must inform you that if payment is not received within five working days of the date of this letter, the debt will be referred to the LCC Debt Recovery Team.

I am obliged to warn you that the debt recovery procedure can result in a summons to Court.

Should you wish to discuss any issue regarding this debt, please contact the school.

Yours sincerely

KAREN MARSHALL  
Headteacher