

# Debt Policy



Adopted from Staffordshire County Council on .....

Signed by ..... on behalf of the Governing Body on .....

## **Introduction**

The schools governing body has a responsibility to have a debt recovery policy which ensures that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school to receive all income to which it is entitled.

## **Aims and Objectives**

To ensure that the governing body complies with the Staffordshire Scheme for Financing Schools and Financial Regulations;

To protect the delegated school budget;

To apply this policy consistently to ensure debt is dealt with in a timely manner;

To ensure further goods or services are not supplied to parents/carers or customers who have not paid for items already received or used.

## **The debt recovery process**

Dove Bank Primary School has procedures in place which are used to collect income. However, in the event that payment is not forthcoming then an official invoice will be raised on the County Council's finance system which will lead to the Council's debt recovery procedures as follows:

- Invoice raised with payment terms of 28 days
- A reminder is sent 3 days after the 28 days has expired
- A final notice is issued before the school can request the debt recovery officer to contact the parent/carer at their home/ business address.

## **Dinner Money**

Payment for schools meals should be paid in advance and clearly marked in a sealed envelope with the child's name, class and amount and given in at the school office (cheques are to be made payable to Staffordshire County Council).

The school office will reconcile each day the payments received to the meals ordered and any discrepancy will be investigated.

Governors have decided on the following policy regarding unpaid meals:

- Day one - Parent/carer rang with the option to bring either money into school or a packed lunch
- Day two – if outstanding payment still not received, another call made to parent/carer requesting either payment or a packed lunch

- Day three – Parent/carer rang, if outstanding payment not received by lunchtime a referral will be made to Local Support Team under the category of Neglect (see below)

## **Non-payment of School Dinner Money**

Parents should note if non-payment for school dinners exceeds 3 consecutive days all cases are reviewed and the following actions will be considered by Governors:

- The matter will be referred to the County Council and recovery action pursued
- **A referral will be made to First Response under the category of neglect inline with School’s Child Protection Policy** (available on the School’s website or School Office on request)

Any parents experiencing difficulty with either payment or providing their child (ren) with an appropriate school dinner, please contact the Headteacher (Mrs E Ford) immediately.

## **Extended school activities**

Payment for extended school activities should be made in advance and clearly marked in a sealed envelope with the name of the child, amount and day/s that the care is required and the appropriate booking form (available from the school office).

Accounts are reviewed on a weekly basis. If in the event that payment has not been made then at the end of the week parents/carers will be called by the school office and sent a text message requesting payment.

Any non-payment will result in the parent/carer being informed that they can no longer use the facility and the debt will be referred onto the County Council for recovery.

## **Board and lodging on residential visits**

The board and lodging element of a residential visit can be charged to parents/carers and they are notified of the cost in advance and are given to opportunity to pay in instalments should they wish.

Payment **must** be made in full before the departure date or the child will not be allowed to attend.

## **Remissions**

In some cases governors have agreed that certain categories of pupils are not liable for the fee or are eligible for a reduced fee for some or all of; extended school activities, music tuition or residential visits. This is included within the Charging and Remissions Policy (reviewed annually).

## Lettings

Contracts for lettings of the school premises will be drawn up as necessary between the school and the client in line with the Charges and Remissions Policy.

Failure to pay on time will result in the debt being referred to the County Council for recovery. The letting agreement will be void and the client will be refused future hires-

## Writing off debts

When all practical and cost effective methods of debt recovery have been exhausted by the County Council the school will be notified of the amount of debt that is considered to be irrecoverable.

The governing body will take into account the age and size of each debt and any advice from the County Council before making a decision to write off debt.

Approved by Governors on \_\_\_\_\_

Due for review on \_\_\_\_\_