



School Meals Debt Policy

Introduction

Wombwell Park Street Primary School has a clear '**no debt**' policy relating to the school meal service. Unpaid debts would have to be paid from the school budget. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents. Every parent should appreciate that this is unacceptable and they should give this policy their full support.

No parent would take their child to a restaurant and expect them to be given food without paying; the same applies at school. If parents believe that their children may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals then the school can provide more details. This allowance is a statutory right and parents who qualify should be encouraged to take this opportunity. The school will help any parent with advice on how to check eligibility and how to apply.

Management of School Dinner Monies

Parent/s must pay in advance for school meals using the online school gateway app or website (www.schoolgateway.com) or in exceptional circumstances by cash or cheque (payable to Wombwell Park Street Primary) handed in to one of the Office team. Children in KS2 will not be provided with a school meal unless it is paid for, except where the child is entitled to free school meals. If a parent genuinely forgets to pay in advance, the school **may** grant a debt allowance of up to £10. However this debt **must be paid the next day** and future meals **must** be paid in advance of any meal being provided.

If the debt is not cleared, parents will receive a text message asking for an immediate payment or the parent must provide a packed lunch. In a case when a debt payment is not received nor a packed lunch provided, a member of the office team will contact the parent by telephone asking them to clear the debt. Otherwise they must provide a lunch from home before lunch time.

If payment of the debt is not received by the next day, the Headteacher reserves the right to begin proceedings against parents to recover the debt. Social Care may also be informed that these parents are not carrying out their duty of care by providing food for their children at lunchtime.

The intention is that by implementing this debt policy parents will be encouraged to manage school dinner money better and, at the same time, ensure that all money that is for children's learning is available.

Establishing a debt policy

The school will ensure that parents are aware of this policy in the following ways:

- Letter
- Newsletter
- School website