



DINNER MONEY POLICY

Ratified by the Governing Board	28 th November 2019
Next Review (annual)	Autumn 2020

INTRODUCTION

The Governing Body has agreed that the school should not subsidise school dinners. Therefore, it is important that debts are not allowed to mount up. This helps the school and the parents who then do not face a large bill at the end of a term. This policy has been compiled recognising the difficulties placed on school in balancing the social welfare of pupils with the responsibility of managing the School Budget.

The school adopts a no debt policy relating to school meals. Money owed affects the school overall budget and must be settled promptly.

COST OF SCHOOL DINNERS

The cost of a school dinner is currently £2.30 and is payable in advance. Parents are expected to pay on a Monday each week or pay each half-term in advance if more convenient. EYFS and KS1 children are currently in receipt of UFSM.

Parents may pay by cash in a labelled envelope or by cheque payable to St John's Primary School, however the preferred payment method is through the School Comms on line payment system.

If children are absent and their absence is pre-notified their dinner money is credited.

Notification of a change of meal arrangement from packed lunch to school meal, or vice versa must be received one half term in advance if possible.

If a child forgets their packed lunch and is given a school meal, parents must pay for the meal on the same day or the following morning at the latest (except for children on Free School Meals).

DEBT RECOVERY

Payment for school meals

- When a pupil has failed to produce dinner money the school may allow a meal to be provided where it is felt that this is a temporary situation, e.g. money lost on the way to school, minor domestic problem, etc. The Admin team will record the details and the parents will be contacted.
- Where a pupil continues to require meals and no payment is made, the matter is referred to the headteacher who contacts parents and discusses the individual circumstances. If, in the opinion of the headteacher, failure to produce a meal could have serious consequences for that pupil, a meal will be provided as an emergency action.
- When a parent genuinely forgets to pay the school may grant a debt allowance of 1 week's meals. The school will contact the parents by text advising them of the situation and the amount outstanding. This debt must be paid during the next week.
- All debtors are contacted by text on a weekly basis.

- In the case when a debt payment is still not received after 1 week, nor a packed lunch provided, parents are phoned to ask them to settle the outstanding balance immediately or provide their child with sandwiches for lunch.
- If the outstanding debt remains unpaid the Governing Body will take action to recover this. A letter will be sent to the parents informing them that the school reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to secure payment. Parents must also be aware that further school meals for their children will need to be paid for at least a month in advance.
- Social Services may be informed that parents are not carrying out their legal responsibility of care by not providing food for their child at lunchtime.
- Should the school consider that the best course of action would be to write off a debt, then the head teacher will seek governor approval in order to do so.

We hope that by implementing this debt policy we are able to help parents manage school dinner money better and ensure that all money intended for children's learning is available for that purpose.

Agreed by the Governing Board on 28th November 2019.

Signed: _____ Chair of Governors