



# **Dinner Money Policy & Procedures**

## Introduction

We acknowledge that on occasion, families do face a change of circumstances, the school will work hard to agree a solution which is not to the detriment of the child; **however, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform Cherry Lane Primary of any changes in their circumstances.** If you believe that your child may be eligible to receive free school meals (which isn't the same as the Universal Free Meals for Early Years and K1) please contact the school office on 01895 444480 and we can help you apply. Eligibility cannot be backdated by the school therefore it is very important to talk to the office staff who are there to support you.

## Rationale

The responsibility of ensuring that school meal payments are made, by parents, lies with Cherry Lane Primary. Monies owed affects the school budget and must be settled promptly. Therefore, a policy is required to ensure school meal debts are kept to a minimum. In writing this policy, the Governors of Cherry Lane Primary School wish to implement one that ensures meals are paid for, whilst aiding Parents/Carers during financial difficulties.

## Procedures

As of 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016, school meals must be paid for in advance of meals being taken. All meals for the period being paid for must be paid on Monday mornings (or the first day back at school following an absence or the start of a new term) and handed to the Class Teacher or to the School Reception.

Meals may be paid for on a weekly, half-termly or termly basis. Meals may no longer be booked or paid for during the week. Refunds will be given at the end of the term or half term when a child has been absent or missed meals.

When a child is leaving Cherry Lane it is imperative that any outstanding monies are paid or refunds are given.

**From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016, the limit for a debt will be £10 maximum. If the money is not paid the child will require a packed lunch from home failing that a basic sandwich will be provided by the school. No school lunches will be available until all monies are paid. Debts cannot be carried over from one school year to another.**

## Debt Procedures

In collecting any outstanding debts, a step by step process will be followed. The time lapse will normally be 5 school days.

Week 1: Each Friday accounts will be reviewed and any accounts with a debt will incur a telephone call followed by a 'debt letter one' which will be sent home via the child. (Appendix A)

Week 2: If the debt remains unpaid 'debt letter 2' will be sent via Royal Mail requesting that the parent/carer makes an appointment with the Headteacher to discuss the outstanding debt. (Appendix B)

Week 3: The matter will be passed to the Governing Body to make a decision on how to deal with debt and may consider a claim in the Small Claims Court. (Appendix C).

Date:

Dear ?

**Re: School Meals – Letter 1**

Further to the telephone call you received I am writing to advise you that there is an outstanding balance of £..... on ..... dinner money account.

It is the policy of Cherry Lane Primary School that the school does not pay for dinners on behalf of the children. As a result of this, I need to advise you that the school will be unable to provide a dinner for ..... until this debt is cleared. A weekly plan to pay the debt would be acceptable if you are facing financial difficulty. I would appreciate your co-operation in setting up a plan.

Please ensure ..... is provided with a packed lunch until the debt is cleared and school dinners can re-commence.

If you wish to discuss this further do not hesitate to contact myself or the School office where all information will be treated confidentially. I enclose a copy of our Dinner Money policy and procedures for your information.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Susana Condrón  
School Business Manager  
Encl: Policy

Date:

Dear ?

**Re: School Meals – Letter 2**

You will recall that I wrote to you a few days ago regarding the outstanding balance on ..... dinner money account to the value of £..... .

As you know, it is the policy of Cherry Lane Primary School that the school does not pay for dinners on behalf of the children. I am disappointed that you have not contacted the school or have been able to start the weekly payment plan as suggested previously. I would request that you now contact the School office or myself as a matter of urgency to make an appointment to discuss this further with myself.

Following the settling of the debt all future meals will have to be paid for in advance and not on the day.

Yours sincerely

Mr S Whitehouse  
Head Teacher

Date:

Dear ?

**Re: School meals – letter 3**

I am disappointed you have been unable to contact me to make arrangements to recover the current outstanding debt of £..... In line with our Dinner Money Policy and Procedures, a copy of which was sent to you, I have no option but to refer this matter to the School Governors.

The School Governors will consider the situation and will contact you in due course over the action they will take, which could include making a claim in the Small Claims court. You will also have to settle any court fees incurred by the school.

Yours sincerely

Mr S Whitehouse

Head Teacher