

Stage 1

Dear Parent / carer

Draft - School Meals Debt Policy for Parents

As from xx/xx/xxxx School has adopted a NO DEBT policy relating to the provision of school meals

If debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents. I am sure every parent will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents give this policy their full support.

I am sure you would not take your child out for a meal 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 please contact the parent helpline number on 020 8314 6221. It is open 10am-4pm Monday to Friday.

Alternatively you can use the online application at

www.lewisham.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals

This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that you use it if you qualify. We will help you all we can with your application. You should also be aware that securing your free entitlement increases the funds available to your school.

Parent/s Carers must pay in advance for their children / children's school lunch using any of the methods of payment outlined below:

Children will not be provided with a school lunch unless it is paid for, except for those that are entitled to free school meals. If a parent genuinely forgets to pay in advance, the school may grant a debt allowance of 5 meals. However these must be paid for and any future meals must be paid for in advance.

If the debt is not cleared, parents must either provide a packed lunch or maybe take the child home for lunch. In a case when a debt payment is not received nor a packed lunch provided, the head teacher will phone the parent to ask them to come to school with the money. Otherwise they must provide sandwiches before lunch time or arrange to take their child home for lunch.

If payment of the debt is not received, the Headteacher reserves the right to begin legal proceedings against parents to recover the debt and ask you to attend a meeting to discuss the matter.

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

If you have any concerns please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Stage 2

Draft first letter to parents having an outstanding debt

xxxxxxx Primary School

Parent or carer of xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Xxxxxx

Xxxxxx

Xxxxxx

Xxxxxx

xxxxxx

Our records show that you have not paid dinner money for your child
xxxxxxxxxxxxxx Class: xx

As at 01/01/2013 your account is showing a debt of **£xxxx**

Please arrange for this money to be paid within 5 working days, once the debt is cleared please ensure the account is always in credit.

You have x ways to pay:

1. In person to the School Bursar
2. Send a cheque to the school

The cost of a school meal is £x.xx per day - £xx per week.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Stage 3

Draft second letter to parents having an outstanding debt

xxxxxxx Primary School

Parent or carer of xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Xxxxxx

Xxxxxx

Xxxxxx

Xxxxxx

xxxxxx

01/01/2013

Our records show that you have not paid dinner money for your child xxxxxxxxxxxxxx Class: xx despite a previous written reminder and a telephone call.

As at xx/xx/xxxx your account is showing a debt of £x

Please arrange for this money to be paid within 5 working days,
You have 2 ways to pay:

1. In person to the School Bursar
2. Send a cheque to the school

Since non-payment for school meals affects the quality of service we offer to the children, the school reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to recover the debt and to inform social services of our concerns that you are not providing a meal for your child at lunch time.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher