

## Pike Fold Primary School

### Dinner Money Policy

Approved by Governing Body on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017

The school's dinner money policy takes into account the following legislation and guidelines:

Maintained school governing bodies and academies must provide paid-for lunches for registered pupils, including nursery pupils who receive education both before and after lunch. This only applies where parents request them and it would be unreasonable not to provide them.

These meals must be free for pupils who receive, or whose parents receive, an eligible benefit (Section 4.5, The Governors Handbook, available at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

In a maintained school, where a meal for a child not receiving FSM has been requested but not paid for, there is no legal requirement for schools to provide a meal in this instance. The course of action in this situation is to be determined by the school.

(Spokesperson for DfE, The Key, 27/01/2014)

The school's dinner money policy also operates within the relevant financial regulations and guidance set out in the Scheme of Financial Delegation and any other legal requirements.

Dinner money costs £11.00 per week, which is **payable in advance** every Monday morning, or on the first day back after a holiday.

Dinner money must be placed into a sealed envelope, clearly labelled with the child's name, year group and amount. No change is given; any leftover amounts will be carried over to the next week. Dinner money balances left at the end of the academic year will be carried over to the next academic year until your child reaches Year 6, when it will automatically be refunded or when your child leaves school, whichever is sooner. Any refunds not collected within the specified time frame will be donated to the school. Parents reserve the right to request a refund at any time when there is a positive balance.

If dinner money is not received on the first day then the parent will receive a text message requesting payment the following day.

In the event that dinner money is not paid by the end of the week then the parent will receive Arrears Text 1, requesting payment of the outstanding arrears plus the following week's advanced payment.

If by the beginning of the second week dinner money is still not paid the parent will receive arrears text 2, informing the parent that the school can no longer provide their child with a school meal and they should send them with a packed lunch, if this is not done it is stated that we cannot provide the child with a meal that day and the parent will be telephoned to bring in a packed lunch for their child. If the Parent refuses to provide their child with a lunch, the Head teacher reserves the right to inform social services.  
(Once the arrears are paid the child can continue to receive school meals)

If by the third week the debt is still outstanding, despite the child being transferred onto packed lunches, the parent will receive Arrears legal letter explaining that the school must pay for outstanding arrears from its budget leaving less money for student resources; an offer of a payment plan is made and the parent is notified that if they do not make any communication with us in the week following the letter that the debt will be transferred to the Governing Body.

By the fourth week, if the payment is still unrecovered, the parent will receive Arrears letter refer GB informing them that the debt has now been referred to the Governing Body who will take steps to collect it which may incur further charges, for which the parent is liable.

Every week until the debt is paid the parent will receive a pupil balance sheet highlighting the debt owed to school.

### **Free School Meals**

Free School Meals can only be granted when a parent has registered to <https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims> and an entitlement notice has been received at school.

In the event that a child's entitlement to Free School Meals changes the parent will be fully liable for any charges incurred as a result of this and any future charges due to be incurred, unless the child is transferred onto packed lunches.

### **Changing meal arrangements**

If a parent would like their child to switch from packed lunches to school meals, or visa versa, we require two weeks written notice. Once the notice has been received and processed by the Administrator, the parent will receive confirmation of the start date via

letter and text message if a number is available. It is the Parent's responsibility to check and adhere to the dates given as they will be liable to pay for any discrepancies in meal charges, where applicable.

APPROVED