

School Debt Policy

Introduction

The schools governing board has a responsibility to have a debt recovery policy which ensures that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school to receive all income to which it is entitled.

Aims and Objectives

To ensure that the governing board complies with the Staffordshire Scheme for Financing Schools and Financial Regulations;

To protect the delegated school budget;

To apply this policy consistently to ensure debt is dealt with in a timely manner;

To ensure further goods or services are not supplied to parents/carers or customers who have not paid for items already received or used.

The debt recovery procedure

(It will be necessary to consider each of the recovery processes listed below in line with the governing board's charges and remissions policy)

Each school in the Trinity Federation has their own procedures in place which are used to collect income. However, in the event that payment is not forthcoming then an official invoice will be raised on the County Council's finance system which will lead to the Council's debt recovery procedures as follows:

- Invoice raised with payment terms of 28 days
- A reminder is sent 3 days after the 28 days has expired
- A final notice is issued before the school can request the debt recovery officer to contact the parent/carer/customer at their home/ business address (minimum value £150) or the matter referred onto the courts (minimum value £250).

Dinner Money

Payment for schools meals / milk should be paid in advance and payment made via parent pay.

The school office will reconcile each week the payments received to the meals ordered and any discrepancy will in the first instance result in a phone call to the parent/carer to request payment. Any parent/carer that has not made payment by the end of the week will be sent an e-mail, letter or informed by telephone.

If payment is still not received within 5 school days then the parent/carer will be informed that the matter will be referred to the County Council and recovery action will be pursued.

Governors have decided on the following policy regarding unpaid meals:

- A meal will be served until the arrears reach £22.50 after which point no further
- No milk will be served unless payment is made in advance.

Music tuition (where provided)

Music lessons are provided by a private tutor at the school. It is the responsibility of the tutor to invoice and collect tuition fees. The school office will help but is not responsible for and debts incurred.

Board and lodging on residential visits

The board and lodging element of a residential visit can be charged to parents/carers and they are notified of the cost in advance and are given to opportunity to pay in instalments should they wish.

Payment must be made in full before the departure date or the child will not be allowed to attend.

Remissions

In some cases governors have agreed that certain categories of pupils are not liable for the fee or are eligible for a reduced fee for some or all of; extended school activities, music tuition or residential visits. This is included within the Charging and Remissions Policy (reviewed annually).

Lettings

Contracts for lettings of the school premises will be drawn up as necessary between the school and the client in line with the Charges and Remissions Policy.

Failure to pay on time will result in the debt being referred to the County Council for recovery. The letting agreement will be void and the client will be refused future hires

Writing off debts

When all practical and cost effective methods of debt recovery have been exhausted by the County Council the school will be notified of the amount of debt that is considered to be irrecoverable.

The governing board will take into account the age and size of each debt and any advice from the County Council before making a decision to write off debt.

Approved by Governors on _____

Due for review on _____