



## **Hazelwood Schools**

# **Debt Recovery Policy, School Meal Debt Policy, Breakfast Club & After School Club Policy**

Reviewed and Adopted: Spring Term 2022

Reviewed by: Resources Committee

**Next Review: Spring Term 2025**

**Review every three years**

## HAZELWOOD SCHOOLS

### SCHOOL MEAL DEBT POLICY FOR PARENTS

Since 2010 Hazelwood Infant and Junior Schools have adopted a strict NO DEBT policy relating to the provision of school meals. This will in effect mean all charges for school meals will be paid in advance via ParentPay, before the meal is taken.

If debts are incurred, then the Schools are liable for this debt and this will mean money which should be spent on your child(ren)'s education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents. Every parent will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents give this policy their full support.

Parent/s must pay for school meals using the payment methods outlined below:

- Credit/Debit Cards Online using ParentPay
- Pay Point Cards (Ask in the main office about a Paypoint card)

If parents believe that their children may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals then please contact the office for further information. The allowance for Free School Meals is a statutory entitlement and should be claimed if your child qualifies. In order to qualify, you will be required to complete an application form and provide any evidence which may be requested. Free school meal entitlement will only apply from the date the evidence has been received and the application has been approved. It cannot be backdated. The Schools will support parents with the application.

Children in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 under Universal Free School Meals will always be given a meal if pre-ordered on School Grid (Ask the main office if you require a School Grid login)

However, children in Key Stage 2 will not be provided with a school lunch unless it is paid for before the meal is taken or the child is entitled to a free school meal.

If there is insufficient credit on a child's account and a packed lunch has not been provided, the Schools will contact the parent to ask them what arrangements they have made to provide their child with food. We appreciate a parent may genuinely forget to pay in advance or a packed lunch box maybe forgotten, in these circumstances the schools may grant a debt allowance of one meal.

If payment is not received and the account is **£11** in debt, you will be contacted by the school office and given 2 days in which to pay off the debt **and credit the account for school meals**. If this doesn't happen the school **will not** provide your child with a dinner and it is **the parents/carers responsibility** to provide a packed lunch until the issue has been resolved. The Schools reserve the right to begin debt management proceedings against parents to recover the debt as outlined in the schools Debt Recovery Policy. If you require further information regarding the School Meals Debt Policy please ask at the office.

As part of the schools duty of care, the Local Authority Children's Services may also be informed that the parents are not carrying out the responsibility of care by not providing food for their children at lunchtime.

## **BREAKFAST CLUB AND AFTER SCHOOL CLUB DEBT POLICY FOR PARENTS**

Since 2016 Hazelwood Infant and Junior Schools moved to all payments of Breakfast Club and After School Club be paid via Parentpay. We do not accept payments in cash for any services. This will in effect mean all money for Breakfast Club and After School Club will be paid in advance, before the child attends the club session.

If debts are incurred, then the Schools are liable for this debt and this will mean money which should be spent on your child(ren)'s education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents. Every parent will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents give this policy their full support.

Parent/s must pay for school meals using the payment methods outlined below:

- Credit/Debit Cards Online using ParentPay
- Pay Point Cards (Ask in the office about a Paypoint card)

The cost for attendance at the Breakfast Club is £2.50 per session and for the After School Club is £7.50 per session. For both clubs payment is required in advance of the week you want your child to attend. If a child(ren) is off sick or on holiday, these days cannot be refunded.

All Breakfast Club and After School Club provision must be paid for **in advance and for the entire half term**. If this doesn't happen your child will not be allowed to attend the provision until full payment is received.

**Fees for Breakfast Club and After School Club must be paid in full on the last working day before the half term begins.**

For example for the next half term: Payments will need to be paid in full by the Friday before the start of the new half term at 5pm. If they are not received by this date then your child will not have a place at Breakfast and/or After School Club.

## **DEBT RECOVERY POLICY**

1. The Schools will actively pursue the collection of income owed to it. This policy incorporates our Schools Meals Debt Policy for Parents.  
Parents of the pupil(s) are liable for the charge.  
The Schools will ensure confidentiality and the anonymity of the families involved will be preserved at all times.
2. **The Schools are required to ensure that:**
  - all invoices outstanding are accurately recorded and maintained.
  - there is documentary evidence of all the steps undertaken by the school to recover the debt. This includes recording the dates that invoices and statements were distributed and/or phone calls, text messages and letters that have been sent to debtors.
  - for all outstanding debts, a final statement (stamped final notice) is issued to all persons liable for the charge. This statement must state “further action will be taken if this account remains outstanding after a period of no less than five days”.

### **3. Pursuance of Debt**

#### **The Governing Body has agreed:**

- the arrangements for debt recovery
- that 5 days is the maximum level of school meal debt which any child would be able to incur
- to consider the Schools undertaking legal action
- to include in the minutes of the Governing Body their approval to pursue any outstanding debt.

#### **The Schools should:**

- not pass onto the debtor any costs incurred in pursuing the outstanding debt
- give the debtor appropriate notification and time to pay the outstanding debt
- send the debtor as a minimum a final statement, which states that this is the final notice and that further action will be taken.
- notify the Governing Body of any outstanding debts.

### **4. Waiving of Debt**

A recommendation to write off a debt can be made when all reasonable avenues to recover the debt have been exhausted, and where it is not cost effective to pursue the debt through legal action.

The Headteacher can waive or reduce the debt, where it is believed the debtor is experiencing financial hardship.

However, a debt can only be written off by resolution of the Governing Body on the recommendation of the Headteacher or delegate.

Any action related to an outstanding debt or the waiving / reducing of a debt should be dealt with confidentially between the debtor and the Headteacher.

Date approved by Governing Body : .....