

Dinner Debt Policy

Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy is effective for North Mead Primary Academy

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Approved by:	Principal
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Revision History:

Version	Date	Author	Summary of Changes:
0.1	July 2017	NHPS	New policy
0.2	24 th June 2020	ST/HH	Name change and due for review



DINNER DEBT POLICY

North Mead Primary Academy has adopted a strict **NO DEBT** policy relating to the school meal service.

If debts are incurred, then the academy 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/carers. Every parent/carer will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents give this policy their full support.

If parents/carers believe that their child may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals please contact the office for more details or go to <https://freeschoolmeals.leicester.gov.uk/>. 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.

To ensure the smooth running of arranging school dinners and subsequent payments the school has set out what is expected of parents/carers.

Dinner booking and payment – School Gateway

From August 2020, North Mead will be moving away from taking cash payments for lunches. Parents/carers must book and pay in advance for school lunches using the School Gateway app. To download the app, a mobile phone number and email address must be provided to the office. Parents/carers can then download School Gateway by going onto <https://schoolgateway.co.uk/>. If they are unable to use the app for any reason, parents/carers will need to send in cash in a named envelope, stating their child's lunch choices.

- **Price of school dinners** – currently £10.00 weekly / daily rate £2.00. We will inform parents when there is a change in rate
- **Lunch bookings and payments must be in advance of school dinners being provided** – lunches must be ordered and paid for on the app by 8am on the day. For parents not yet on the app, lunch bookings will be inputted by a member of staff and cash should be sent into school in advance
- **Credits** - Where lunches are booked and paid for on the app but a child is then absent, we will remove the booking and School Gateway will credit your account
- **Parents/carers who do not want their child to have a school lunch** should provide a healthy packed lunch or arrange to take them home for lunch

If a parent/carer genuinely forgets to pay in advance, the academy may grant a debt allowance of 1 meal however this debt must be paid next day and future meals must be paid in advance before any meal is provided.

Debt Procedures

If the debt is not cleared, parents/carers must either provide a packed lunch or take the child home for lunch. In a case when a debt payment is not received nor a packed lunch provided, the school office will phone the parent/carer to ask them to come to school with the money to pay immediately. 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 by the next day, the Principal reserves the right to begin legal proceedings against parents to recover the debt. In extreme circumstances Social Services may also be informed that these parents are not carrying out the responsibility of care by not providing food for their children at lunchtime.

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

The limit of £10.00 for arrears is set. When the arrears for dinner money for a child exceed £10.00 the action is to immediately suspend any further school dinners for that child. This will result in the parent having to make alternative arrangements for the child's dinner such as providing them with a packed lunch.

If the system is operated as instructed i.e. payments in advance then there should be no arrears – except in an emergency situation.

North Mead Primary Academy do not offer credit facilities.