

**COLLECTION OF SCHOOL MEAL MONIES POLICY FOR ST. MARGARET'S CofE
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



At St. Margaret's Church of England Primary School we seek to develop wisdom, encourage aspiration and promote dignity and acceptance enabling our respectful children to live a life giving back to the community.

John 10:10: 'Live life in all its fullness.'

Aspiration

Wisdom

Endurance

Approved by the governing body on:	Autumn 2024
Shared with stakeholders on:	Autumn 2024
Next review:	Autumn 2025

Introduction

This policy concerns the collection of School Meals money and the approach to be taken in the case of debts arising when parents/carers fail to pay for School Meals. This policy will be published on the School Website and parents/carers advised of the policy when their children start at St. Margaret's CofE Primary School and through periodic reminders on the newsletter.

General Principle

School meals must be paid for in advance by bank transfer if possible. If a child is to have meals for the duration of the week, monies must be received before the start of that week or as we accept children having an occasional meal, monies must be received on the day of the meal.

If debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on all children's education in school is used to pay for debts incurred by individual parents/carers. The Governing Body see this as unacceptable and request that all parents/carers give this policy their full support.

Free School Meals Entitlement

Children in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 receive Universal Free School Meals.

Children in Key Stage 2 will not be provided with a school meal unless it is paid for, except those confirmed as entitled to Free School Meals. If parents/carers believe that their child(ren) may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals they should contact Essex County Council. As this allowance is a statutory right for qualifying children it is important that parents/carers make use of it. The school is only allowed to provide free school meals to children where this is officially approved and informed in writing by the Local Authority.

Procedure for Collection of Arrears

It is accepted that on occasion arrears may arise for various reasons eg children forget their dinner money or are absent on the day it is collected. However, arrears cannot be allowed to accumulate. The Governing Body has therefore agreed the following policy where arrears arise.

A gentle reminder letter will be sent home after two weeks of accumulated arrears (see Appendix 1).

A second letter will be sent to the parent/guardian if the arrears still haven't been cleared after four weeks. This will state that with immediate effect no further school meals will be provided for their child(ren) and the debt must be cleared within five working days (see Appendix 2).

A final letter will be issued after six weeks if the arrears have still not been cleared. This letter informs the parent/guardian that once the final five working day deadline has expired the debt will be passed onto the Debt Recovery Team at Essex County Council where legal proceedings may begin (see Appendix 3).



Date: _____

Gentle Reminder Letter

Child's name: _____

Class: _____

Dear Parent/ Carer

According to our records your School Meals payments are in arrears. The debt amounts to £_____.

Please settle this amount as soon as possible by bank transfer to the school account. If you are having difficulties making payment, please either contact the School Office or the Headteacher for a confidential discussion.

Bank: Lloyds Bank Plc
Account Name: St Margaret's CofE VC Primary School
Sort Code: 30-92-16
Account Number: 71751760

Our Collection of School Meals Money and School Meals Debt Policy is published on the school website. A paper copy of this document can be made available on request.

Information on who is eligible for Free School Meals is available at: <http://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Pupil-Parent-Support/Pages/Healthy-Living-School-Meals.aspx>. If you would like assistance with this, please contact the school office. Parents should note that Free School Meals are only awarded from the date of application and therefore the outstanding debt to school must still be paid.

If you have any queries, please contact the school office.

Kind regards

Mrs Stephanie Newland
Headteacher



Date: _____

Accumulated School Meal Arrears

Child's name: _____

Class: _____

Dear Parent/ Carer

Following our letter dated _____ regarding outstanding School Meals money, our records show that this has not been paid.

The amount of arrears is now £_____.

If this debt is not cleared immediately, we cannot provide any School Meals. You must provide a daily packed lunch for your child from this point until the debit is cleared. If the debt payment is not received nor a packed lunch provided, we will phone to ask you to come to school with the outstanding arrears or to provide sandwiches before lunch time. Please note, no further school meals will be provided until this debt is cleared. Parents cannot send in payment for specific days unless arrears are cleared.

This debt needs to be paid within five working days, by bank transfer to the school account.

Bank: Lloyds Bank Plc
Account Name: St Margaret's CofE VC Primary School
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Account Number: 71751760

If you have any queries or wish to discuss this matter please contact the school office.

Kind regards

Mrs Stephanie Newland
Headteacher



APPENDIX 3

Date: _____

Non Payment of School Meal Arrears.

Child's name: _____ Class: _____

Dear Parent/ Carer

Our records show that you have not cleared the school dinner money arrears for your child(ren) despite previous letters sent home on _____ and _____ by Mrs Hyde.

Arrears to date total £ _____

In line with the school policy on School Meal money arrears, a copy of which is published on the school website, I must inform you that if payment is not received within five working days of the date of this letter, the debt will be referred to the ECC Debt Recovery Team.

I am obliged to warn you that the debt recovery procedure can result in a summons to Court.

Should you wish to discuss any issue regarding this debt, please contact the school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Stephanie Newland
Headteacher