



St Raphael's Catholic Primary School
COLLECTION OF SCHOOL MEALS MONEY
SCHOOL MEALS DEBT POLICY
(NURSERY & YEAR 3 – YEAR 6)

1. Introduction

This policy concerns the collection of school meals money and the approach to be taken in the cases of debts arising when parents/carers fail to pay for school meals.

2. General Principle

School meals must be paid for in advance. If a pupil is to have meals for the duration of the week monies must be received before the start of that week or in exceptional circumstances if the pupil is 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 pupils' 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.

3. Free School Meals Entitlement- Benefits Related FSM

Pupils 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(children) may qualify for entitlement to Benefits Related Free School Meals further information on FSM is available via the school website and parents can apply at <https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims-tameside>.

As this allowance is a statutory right for qualifying pupils it is important that parents/carers make use of it. The school is only allowed to provide free school meals to pupils where it has been officially approved by the Local Authority.

4. Procedure for Collection of Arrears

It is accepted that on occasion arrears may arise for various reasons. However, arrears cannot be allowed to accumulate. The governing body has therefore agreed the following policy where arrears arise.

- A gentle reminder email will be sent home after 1 week of accumulated arrears (Appendix 1).
- The parent/carer will be informed via email when two weeks' arrears have accumulated and advised to make immediate payment (Appendix 2).
- A final email to the parent/carer informing them that they will be asked to bring a packed lunch and that no meals will be provided for their child/children if payment has not been received by a specified date, (i.e. in accordance with the policy the date when two weeks' arrears have accumulated).
- No meals to be provided to pupils when arrears exceed two weeks and the parent/carer advised to send in a packed lunch for their child/children.
- Once the final email deadline has expired the debt will be passed onto the debt recovery team at Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council where legal proceedings may begin.