

## **Banister Primary School**

### **Dinner Money Payment policy**

**This policy does not apply to children eligible for free school meals.**

#### **Introduction**

Parents are responsible for the payment of school meals taken by their children. This policy is designed to ensure that school meal debts are kept to a minimum. The Governors of Banister Primary School wish to ensure that meals are paid for, whilst helping Parents and Carers during financial difficulties and ensuring children still receive a meal at lunchtime.

#### **Procedures**

School meals must be paid for in advance of meals being taken. All meals for the period being paid must be paid in advance online, or to the office (cash and cheque only) if internet access is not possible.

Meals may be paid for at a time that suits parents, however children should know which lunch option they will have each day. When choosing school meals their dinner money account should be in credit.

When a child is leaving, the school office will check the balance of the child's account and refund any credit balance and obtain any debt outstanding.

The school will continue to support any parents/carers who believe their child may be eligible to receive free school meals.

#### **Debt procedures**

In collecting any outstanding debts, a step-by-step process will be followed. The time lapse between the steps will normally be 5 school days. However this may vary depending on factors such as the level of debt and the time period within a term. The next step will be implemented if the debt has not been repaid or any contact made with the school.

Step 1:

Each Monday debts will be reviewed and a "debt letter one" will be sent (Appendix A)

Step 2:

For those debts which received "letter one" the previous week and have not cleared and still have debts over £20, "debt letter two" will be sent. This letter requests that the child is provided with a packed lunch until the debt is cleared, the School office will ensure this is adhered to – if the child arrives at School without a packed lunch the parent/carer will be telephoned but the school will offer to provide a school meal (Appendix B)

**Step 3:**

For those debts which received “letter two” the previous week have not been cleared and still have debts over £20, the school will contact the parent by telephone to arrange an appointment.

We acknowledge that on occasion, families have financial difficulties and in these proven circumstances, the school will work hard with the family to agree a solution which is not to the detriment of the child.

In the event of a child leaving Banister Primary School with an outstanding debt, the Governing Body will need to consider whether to write off this debt or pursue payment by other means including making a claim in the Small Claims Court.

Date agreed: October 2021

Date to be reviewed: October 2023