



Asterdale Primary School

Debt Recovery Policy

School Meals, Wraparound Care and Additional Nursery Hours

Written by:	Mr J O'Leary - Headteacher
Approved by:	Governing Body
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We as a school consider our equality duties under the Equality act 2010. The general duties are to: -

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

This policy understands the principle of the Act and the work needed to ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity

Purpose of the Policy

Asterdale Primary School's Debt Recovery Policy has been adopted to ensure a consistent and fair approach to debt incurred by parents/carers whose children access school meals and wider chargeable school services.

The responsibility for ensuring payments are made rests with parents/carers. Unrecovered debt impacts directly on the school budget and resources available for all pupils.

Scope

This policy applies to school meals, wraparound care, breakfast club, after-school club, additional nursery hours and other chargeable school services.

School Meals

Free School Meals remain available to eligible families.

Parents whose entitlement ceases must provide a packed lunch or pay for a meal.

The preferred payment method is through the school's Arbor app.

The school operates a firm approach to managing and monitoring debts. The school will review debts regularly and normally contact families when balances become a cause for concern, currently £40 or above.

Wraparound Care Debt

Parents/carers must ensure that all breakfast club, after-school club and wraparound care fees are paid promptly. Where arrears arise, the school will contact families and may agree a repayment arrangement. If debts remain outstanding, access to wraparound provision may be withdrawn until the debt is cleared.

Additional Nursery Hours Debt

Parents/carers accessing nursery provision beyond funded entitlement must pay charges in accordance with published fees. Where debts remain unpaid, additional paid hours may be withdrawn. Funded nursery entitlement will continue where applicable.

Debt Recovery Process

The school will normally follow a staged debt recovery process including informal reminders, formal written reminders, and where necessary further recovery action in accordance with Odyssey Collaborative Trust procedures and, where appropriate, seek support from the Trust regarding further recovery or legal action.

For significant debts, the school will seek advice and support from Odyssey Collaborative Trust in accordance with Trust financial procedures.

Allocation of Payments

Where multiple charges exist, payments received may be allocated against the oldest outstanding debt first unless otherwise agreed by the school.

Equality and Hardship

Where families experience financial difficulty, parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school at the earliest opportunity so appropriate support or payment arrangements can be considered.

In exceptional circumstances, and where genuine financial hardship is evidenced, the Headteacher may consider reducing or waiving outstanding debt in line with Trust procedures.

Letter 1 – Initial Reminder

Date

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Outstanding School Account Balance

According to our records there are outstanding charges on your child's school account. These may relate to school meals, wraparound care and/or additional nursery hours. As per our Debt Recovery Policy, payment must be made immediately.

Please arrange payment by the requested date.

Yours sincerely

Mr J O'Leary
Headteacher

Letter 2 – Final Reminder / Withdrawal of Services

Date

Dear Parent/Carer,

There remains an outstanding balance on your child's account. It is the policy of Asterdale Primary School that the school does not fund chargeable services on behalf of families. Unless payment is received or an agreed payment plan is maintained, the school may withdraw access to school meals (where not entitled to FSM), wraparound care and/or additional paid nursery hours until the debt is cleared.

A repayment plan may be considered.

Yours sincerely

Mr J O'Leary
Headteacher