

Bishops' C of E & R C Primary School



*'Live Fully, Laugh Often, Learn Deeply, Love as God Loves You.....
and Let Your Light Shine!'*

ARREARS & DEBT RECOVERY POLICY DINNER MONEY & BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL PROVISION

The Policy was formally adopted by the Governing Board on:	Date: Summer 2025	Next Review Date: Summer 2027
--	-------------------	----------------------------------

The Governing Body has resolved to ensure that all children receive a meal at lunch time whilst recognising the school budget should not be used to pay for debts incurred by individual parents/carers.

CONTENTS

1.0	Confirmation that the Debt Recovery Policy for Traded Activities has been discussed and adopted by the full governing body.....
2.0	Introduction
3.0	General Principle.....
4.0	Free School Meals.....
5.0	Procedure for collection of arrears for Dinner Money and Little Fingers (Out of hours provision)
	Appendix 1 – Gentle reminder letter
	Appendix 2 - Accumulated school meals arrears letter
	Appendix 3 - Non-payment of school dinner money arrears

1.0 Confirmation that the Dinner Money Debt Recovery Policy in respect of The Bishops C of E and RC Primary School has been discussed and formerly adopted by the full governing body.

Signed by:

Chair of Governors: R. Higgs

Date: 16/06/2025

Print name: Rob Higgs

Chair of Resources Committee: E. Saunders

Date: 16/06/2025

Print name: Emma Saunders

Headteacher: G. Waters

Date: 16/06/2025

Print name: Greg Waters

2.0 Introduction

This policy concerns the collection of school meals money & Little Fingers (out of hours provision) and the approach to be taken in cases of debts arising when parent/carers fail to pay for school meals. Parents/Carers will be sent a copy of this policy when their children reach Key Stage 2 (KS2).

All pupils in the Foundation Stage and Key stage 1 are now entitled to receive Universal Infant Free School meals

3.0 General Principle

- 3.1 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 in advance of, or during that week.
- 3.2 If the school is to accept pupils having an occasional meal, monies must be received during that week.
- 3.3 Payment for Little Fingers must be received by the end of the month. All sessions are loaded on at the end of the previous month therefore giving a month for payment to be received. If payment is not received by the end of the month then the place for the following month is not guaranteed for the child(ren).
- 3.4 If the school accepts ad-hoc bookings for Little Fingers, payment must be received by the end of the month.
- 3.4 If debts are incurred, these have to be paid from the school budget. 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.

4:0 Free School Meals

- 4.1 KS2 pupils will not be provided with a school meal unless it is paid for, except those confirmed as entitled to free school meals.
- 4.2 If parents/carers believe that their child/children may qualify for entitlement to free school meals, they should contact the school or complete an online application form on the Local Authority website.
- 4.3 As this allowance is a statutory right for qualifying pupils it is important that parents/carers make use of it.
- 4.4 The school is only allowed to provide free school meals to pupils where entitlement has been verified.

5:0 Procedure for Collection of Arrears

- 5.1 It is accepted that on occasion arrears may arise for various reasons. However, arrears cannot be allowed to accumulate.
- 5.2 The governing body has therefore agreed the following policy where arrears arise.
- A gentle reminder email / text message will be sent every Friday to any arrears for dinner money payment.
 - The parent/carer will be informed by text where in excess of £15.00 arrears has accumulated and advised to make immediate payment (Appendix 1).
 - Reminders are sent via email to Little Finger families that have not paid their arrears by the third week of the month. If payment is not received the following week, another email is sent to chase payment.
- 5.3 Any parent/guardian experiencing financial difficulty may make a claim for the remission of charges which should be addressed to the Headteacher and will be considered confidentially on an individual basis.
- 5.4 The Headteacher will be consulted regarding accounts where no payment has been received in 4 weeks and/or there is a significant debt. It will then be decided if no meals are to be provided until the arrears are cleared.
- 5.5 If a final letter is issued and the deadline has expired the Governing Body will decide whether legal proceedings should begin.

APPENDIX 1

Dear parent/carer

As at today's date there is an outstanding dinner money balance on your child's account. Please arrange to make payment for this.

The only form of payment that we now accept is online via scopay. If you have not yet registered please contact the school office and we will send you an access code.

Dinners are £2.50 per day and we kindly ask that school dinners be paid for in advance to avoid building up a debtor balance.

If you think you might be eligible for free school meals you can check online at <https://pps.lqfl.org.uk/>

If you are experiencing financial difficulties, please contact Mrs Day or Mrs Boreham to discuss payment options in confidence.

Thank you for your co-operation.

The School Office