

Debt Recovery Policy



	Name	Date
Prepared by:	Dominic Smart & Amanda MacMurdie	November 2017 (Updated February 2019)
Approved by:	Governing Body	December 2017
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Associated Policies

- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Children not collected guidance

De Bohun Primary School & Children's Centre

Aim

The School will actively pursue (through written correspondence, meetings with the debtor and phone calls) the collection of monies owed to it. This includes debt from, uniform sales, Breakfast Club, After School Project & Clubs, commercial organisations, school dinners and other service providers.

The School will ensure confidentiality and the anonymity of the families involved will be preserved at all times.

The School are required to ensure that:

- all invoices outstanding are accurately recorded and maintained.
- there is documentary evidence of all the steps undertaken by the school to recover the debt. This includes recording the dates that invoices and statements were distributed and/or phone calls, text messages and letters that have been sent to debtors.

For all outstanding debts, a final statement (stamped final notice) is issued to all persons liable for the charge. This statement must state *"further action will be taken if this account remains outstanding after a period of ten school days"*.

Pursuance of Debt

The Governing Body has agreed:

- that 10 school days is the maximum level of school meal debt, Breakfast Club debt or After School Club debt which any family would be able to incur (£23 for school lunches, £50 for After School Project and £20 for Breakfast club).
- to consider the School undertaking legal action
- to include in the minutes of the Governing Body their approval to pursue any outstanding debt.

Actions taken to pursue debt:

De Bohun Primary School will give the debtor appropriate notification and time to pay the outstanding debt. Where financial hardship, or exceptional circumstances are present, please refer to the school's Charging and Remissions Policy. The school will make every effort to work with the debtor to support repayment of outstanding debt.

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Step 1

- The Finance Officer will email or phone the debtor to inform them of the debt. The debtor will be invited to pay the outstanding balance at the earliest opportunity. The debtor will also be invited to discuss any issues with the Finance Officer to ensure support is given where required.

Step 2

- If the agreed payment is not received a letter & email will be sent to the debtor advising them of the deadline to clear the outstanding debt. A meeting with the Finance Officer or a member of SLT will be offered if issues preventing payment are present. The matter will be referred to the Headteacher to authorise any adjustment required.

Step 3

- Parents & Carers:** Following the failure to pay by the agreed date, services that are being provided to the debtor will stop. The debtor will not longer be able to use Breakfast Club or After School Club until the payment is cleared. School meals will not longer be provided, however all children will always receive a basic cold option school dinner in the event of reaching Stage 3.
- Other service providers:** The school reserves the right to take legal advice and action where required.

Records of each step will be recorded.

Please note: If After School Project provision is removed following escalation to Step Three, it remains the parent or carer's responsibility to provide alternative child care arrangements. The school is not responsible for child care provision after the end of the school day. If this situation occurs, the school will follow its *Children not collected guidance*.

Waiving of Debt

A recommendation to write off a debt can be made when all reasonable avenues to recover the debt have been exhausted, and where it is not cost effective to pursue the debt through legal action.

The Head teacher can waive or reduce the debt, where it is believed the debtor is experiencing financial hardship.

However, a debt over £500 can only be written off by resolution of the Governing Body on the recommendation of the Head teacher or delegate.

Any action related to an outstanding debt or the waiving / reducing of a debt should be dealt with confidentially between the debtor and the Head teacher.