SCHOOL MEALS DEBT POLICY

**Introduction**

Wellesbourne Primary & Nursery School has adopted a clear NO DEBT policy relating to school meal service.

If debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on the children’s education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents/carers. Every parent/carer will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents give this policy their full support.

No parent/carer would take their child to a restaurant/McDonald’s and expect them to be given food without paying; the same applies at school.

**Free School Meals**

If parents/carers believe that their child may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals please contact the One Stop Shop or school office. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that you use it if you qualify.

**Universal Free School Meals**

Every child in Reception, Year One and Year Two children are entitled to receive a Universal Free School Meal.

**Payment for School Meals**

Parents/carers must pay in advance for the school by sending in cash or a cheque (made payable to Wellesbourne Primary & Nursery School) in a marked envelope.

Children will not be provided with a school meal unless it is paid for, except those that are entitled to free school meals. If a parent genuinely forgets to pay in advance, the school may grant a debt allowance of one meal. However this debt must be paid next day and future meals must be paid in advance before any meal is provided.

If a debt is not cleared, parents/carers must either provide a packed lunch or take the child home for lunch. In a case when a debt payment is not received nor a packed lunch provided, the Administration Officer will phone the parent/carer to ask them to come to school with the money. Otherwise they must provide sandwiches before lunchtime or arrange to take their child home for lunch.

Parents/Carers will be informed immediately of any price increase.

**If Payment Has Not Been Made**

If your child has taken a meal which has not been paid for you will be sent a reminder detailing how much you owe (Appendix 1). If payment is not received by Friday a further letter will be sent detailing the consequences of non payment and a final date by which payment must be made (Appendix 2).

The school will work closely with parents/carers in working out a form of payment plan to help resolve the situation.

**Consequences of Non Payment For School Meals**

If payment of the debt is not received, the Headteacher reserves the right to begin legal proceedings against parents/carers to recover the debt. Social Services may also be informed that these parents/carers are not carrying out the responsibility of care by not providing food for their child at lunchtime. It is not the responsibility of the School to provide lunch for pupils. It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to provide a meal, either a school lunch or a packed lunch or take the child home.

**Conclusion**

We hope that by implementing this debt policy we are able to help parents manage school dinner money effectively, reduce the administration time and costs involved chasing dinner money debts and at the same time ensure that all money is for children’s learning is available.

Approved by the Governing Body November 2016

Review date September 2017

**Signed..................................................................**

 **Chair of Governors**

**Date .....................................................................**

 **APPENDIX 1**

Parent/Carer of

Our records show that you have not paid dinner money for your child

...................................................................Class..................................

despite a telephone call.

As at ...........................................our records show a debt of £..............................

Please arrange for this money to be paid immediately. Please send money to school tomorrow in a marked envelope.

The cost of a school meal is £2.10 per day - £10.50 a week.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely

M Mallon

Headteacher

 **APPENDIX 2**

Parent/Carer of

Our records show that you have not paid dinner money for your child

.....................................................................Class.................................

despite a telephone call and a previous written reminder.

As at ..............................our records show a debt of £........................

Please arrange for this money to be paid immediately. Please send money to school tomorrow in a marked envelope.

The cost of a school meal is £2.10 per day - £10.50 a week.

Since non-payment for school meals affects the quality of service we offer to the children, we need to ensure that all payments are up to date and I am afraid that if the debt is not cleared by the end of this week it will not be possible to provide your child with a school meal. You will need to make your own arrangements for your child’s lunch.

The school reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to recover the debt and to inform social services of our concerns that you are not providing a meal for your child at lunchtime.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely

M Mallon

Headteacher