

# School Meals Debt Policy

## **Safeguarding Statement**

**Everyone at Horton Grange shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe by contributing to:**

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn in school and;
- Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in school.

The school has adopted a policy whereby parents can be one week in arrears with payments for school meals.

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. I hope you will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents give this policy their fully support.

No parent would take their child to a restaurant or café and expect them to be given food without paying; the same applies for school. If you believe that your child may qualify for Free School Meals, please contact Mrs Hewes for more details. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that you use it if you qualify. We will help you all we can with your application.

You can pay for school meals online via your child's School Grid account. You can pay by credit or debit card or set up a direct debit. **(This is our preferred method of payment)**. If you would like a login, please contact Mrs Gibbard. Or you can pay by cash or cheque; dinner money envelopes are available from school.

Payment is due on a Monday and the cost is £11.50 per week.

These are the steps the school will take to ensure payment is received.

- Step 1:** If you exceed the one week limit, you will be contacted via telephone to remind you that a payment is due and you will receive notification from School Grid regarding your account.
- Step 2:** If no payment is received, you will receive a letter asking you to provide a packed lunch for your child until the amount is under the one week limit.
- Step 3:** If you fail to make a payment or contact school to set up a repayment plan, you will receive a letter informing you that the school is taking legal advice to recover the debt.

Any debt accrued will be transferred to a siblings account should your eldest child leave school with any outstanding debt.

As your child comes towards the end of their time at Horton Grange, please monitor their account so overpayments are not made. If your account is in credit when your child leaves school, if the amount is over £10.00, the school will refund you. If your child has a sibling in school, the funds will be transferred to their account.

We hope that by implementing this debt policy we are able to help you manage school dinner money better and at the same time ensure that all money that is for children's learning is available.