

Abacus Primary School



School Meals Non-Payment Policy for Parents

Updated September 2022

The Governors of Abacus Primary School are committed to a transparent, consistent and fair approach to the operation of the school dinner system. By adopting this policy, the Governors wish to ensure that parents, carers, children and staff can work together to ensure that the school dinner system works efficiently and effectively and that arrears in payment can be avoided. Where debts are built up over a period of time, it can be harder for parents to pay them off. In addition, if a debt incurred by parents during the course of the school year is not repaid by the end of the Summer term, then costs that should have been paid for by that parent will have to be paid for from the school budget instead.

This means that money which should have been spent on our children's education is instead used to pay for debts incurred by parents, which has a negative impact on learning for all. Our parents choose to buy this service from the school and can decide to provide a packed lunch instead.

Free School Meals are also available if parents believe they qualify for this service. Please contact the school office for more details and an application form if appropriate.

Payment for School Meals

- School meals are available to pupils at a cost of £3.00 per day or at no cost to those in receipt of Free School Meals
- Parents must pay in advance for school meals using ParentPay
- Any credits for meals paid for but not taken remain on the system and are carried forward to the next week/term/year until Year 6 when any credit remaining will be transferred back to the parent or to a younger sibling at the school
- Any meals ordered, where the child is subsequently sent home due to illness, do have to be paid for as the meal has already been ordered, unless they are sent home before 10.30am

Treatment of Arrears

- If your child's account goes in to arrears you will be notified by text to make a payment to your child's account
- Once your child's account exceeds arrears of £15 or more you will be requested, via text, to provide a packed lunch for your child until the debt is cleared
- If payment is still not made, you will receive a telephone call from the school office or Head Teacher
- Should a child arrive at school without a packed lunch or without payment for a school meal, the school will telephone the parent to see whether alternative arrangements have been made
- The school is not obliged to provide a school dinner where payment is not forthcoming or where authorisation for Free School Meals has not been received.
- The school retains its discretion to refuse to provide a school meal in circumstances where there has been a persistent non-payment. However, we regard this as a last resort. We do not wish our children to be in a situation where their learning or welfare suffers and the school will therefore act promptly to address such issues at an early stage and to work with families in order to prevent arrears of dinner monies from accumulating to a point beyond parents' means to settle