



# St.Mary's Catholic Primary School

*Part of The Christus Catholic Trust*



## School Debt Policy

Respect Ourselves, Respect Others,  
Respect our School, Love God

This school is committed to safe guarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment

## **Our Mission Statement**

Respect Ourselves, Respect Others, Respect our School, Love God

## **Aims of the Policy**

This policy relates to contributions for School Dinner, Breakfast Club and School Clubs and Nursery Extended Provision, the only non-voluntary payments the school presently collects. Where appropriate, this debt collection model will be used for any other monies the school wishes to collect in the future.

Within this policy, the use of the term “parent” shall relate equally to parents, guardians and/or carer.

St. Mary’s Catholic Primary school’s debt policy will observe the relevant financial regulations and guidance set out in the school’s Financial Regulations and any other legal requirements.

## **School Meals**

This policy has been written to help our school adopt a consistent approach to debt incurred by parents whose children take school meals. It provides clarity and consistency in managing the debt and will also help parents clearly understand what is expected of them.

The responsibility of ensuring school meal payments are made by parents lies with the School. Therefore, a policy is required to ensure school meal debts are kept to a minimum. In writing this policy, the Governors of St Mary’s Catholic Primary School wish to implement one that ensures meals are paid for, whilst aiding Parents during financial difficulties and ensuring children still receive a meal at lunchtime.

School meals must be paid for in advance of meals being taken. School meals are charged at £2.30per day (4<sup>th</sup> November 2019). Parents will be informed of any price increase to school meals, as soon as possible. All meals for the period being paid for must be paid in advance online. Meals may be paid for on a daily, weekly, monthly, half termly or termly basis.

Children should know which lunch option they will have each day. If choosing school meals their lunch account must be in credit.

When a child is leaving it is imperative for the school office to check the balance of the child’s account and refund any credit balance.

The child may be eligible to receive free school meals, if the parent is in receipt of the following:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigrations & Asylum Act 1999,
- The Guarantee element of the State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (providing no entitlement to Working Tax Credit) and Working Tax Credit run-on

Please contact the school office, who can provide you with information 'how to apply for free school meals'. The school will encourage parents to make an application for free school meals, whether the child takes school meals or not, as the school will receive additional funding known as Pupil Premium.

Since schools will be invoiced for meals taken, it is essential that sufficient funds are credited for these meals into the central account as if there are insufficient funds then the school will have to cover the shortfall from their budget.

### **Breakfast Club**

Children can only attend if the fee has been paid. Breakfast Club may be paid for on a daily, weekly, half-termly or termly basis and parents are advised through the school newsletter towards the end of each half or full term the cost of the sessions for the next period. To secure a place, Parents must book and pay for the sessions, if the child does not attend the session, no refund will be given.

Places are booked online, up to 4pm on the day preceding the day required and only if there is sufficient money on the account to cover the cost (currently £2.50 per day).

When a child is leaving it is imperative for the school office to check the balance of the child's account and refund any credit balance and obtain any debt outstanding.

If the club is cancelled for an unforeseen reason (eg. Staff absence or other matters outside school control) a re-imburements for the lost session(s) will be provided.

### **School Clubs (Before / After-school)**

Children may only attend if the fees have been paid. Schools clubs are paid on either half-termly or termly basis and parents are advised through the school newsletter or leaflets what club is available and the cost per session. Places are secured as long as payment, for the full period, is received in advance with the consent form.

If the club is cancelled for an unforeseen reason (eg. Staff absence or other matters outside school control) a refund for the lost session(s) will be provided.

The Governing Body acknowledge that, on occasion, families have financial difficulties and in these proven circumstances, the school will work hard with the family to agree a solution which is not to the detriment of the child.

### **Nursery Extended Provision**

Children may only attend extended provision if the fees have been paid in advance. These are collected on the first day of each calendar month for the forthcoming month. The amount payable is calculated based on the number of sessions available. Places are secured as long as payment, for the full period, is received in advance with the consent form.

If a session is cancelled for an unforeseen reason (eg. Staff absence or other extreme matters outside school control) a re-imbusement for the lost session(s) will be provided.

The Governing Body acknowledge that, on occasion, families have financial difficulties and in these proven circumstances, the school will work hard with the family to agree a solution which is not to the detriment of the child.

Policy Name: School Debt Policy		
Reviewer: M Jones	Reviewed Date: December 2019	Date of next review: April 2021