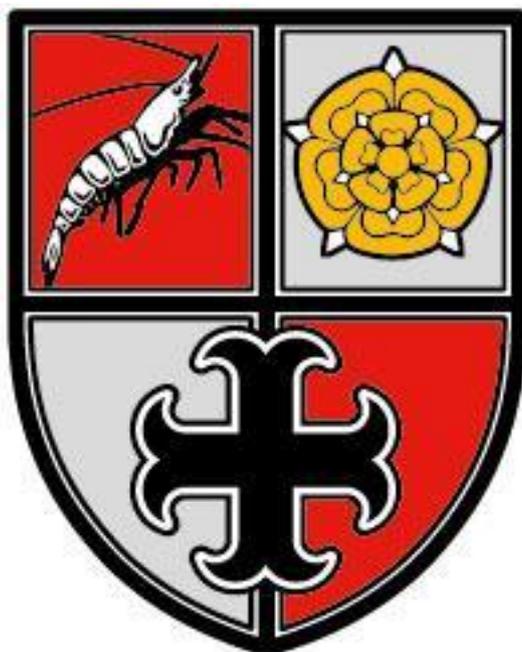


# MARSHSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Debt

### Spring 2020

Date reviewed by sub-committee:	<u>Resources 10.02.2020</u>
Date Approved by Full Governing Body	<u>10.03.2020</u>
Chair:	<u>Andrew Brown</u>
Headteacher:	<u>Katharine Hall</u>
Review Date:	<u>Spring 2023</u>

Version No 2 – 10/03/2020

### EQUALITY STATEMENT

Our school recognises children's diverse circumstances and is committed to its legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. Each child regardless of their background could be a victim of child abuse and is therefore entitled to the same degree of protection and support.

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school. These procedures have been written to help Marshside Primary School adopt a consistent approach to debt incurred by parents whose children take school dinners or attend the out of hours club. It provides clarity and consistency in managing the debt and will also help parents clearly understand what is expected of them.

The school meals service and out of hours club (OoHC) are no different than any other business, where the service given has to be paid for by someone. If debts mount up, then it is the school's budget that has to pay for them. This means money, which should be spent on children's education, is used to pay for any unpaid meals or the provision of the OoHC.

Parents should be able to relate to the situation that they cannot take their child to a restaurant e.g. Mc Donalds and expect them to be given food without paying.

The school is not obliged to provide a school dinner or use of the OoHC services, when there is no payment or where free school meals authorisation has not been given. We will therefore act promptly to address such issues at an early stage in order to prevent arrears of dinner money from accumulating beyond parents' ability to pay. The school reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to recover the debt.

If a parent repeatedly fails to provide a packed lunch or sufficient monies to cover the cost of a school meal or use of the OoHC services, there may be a referral to Social Care.

### **School meals.**

The Free School Meals system is there for parents who cannot afford meals. If you believe that you may qualify for the entitlement to Free School Meals, please contact Mrs Edge in the school office for more details. Not only could you have your school meals paid for, your child will also benefit from a pupil premium payment. This payment is made to the school and has to be used to support your child directly.

Should payment not be made we would contact you and inform you that you will be required to provide packed lunches until any outstanding payment is cleared.

Should parents find themselves in financial difficulty, it is important that they contact school as soon as possible.

The school will make parents aware of these procedures in the following ways:

- A letter to parents;
- Reminders in the school's newsletter;
- The school prospectus;
- The school website.

This will ensure that all parents get the same message in a consistent way. All parents will be provided with a copy of the procedures when their child joins the school.

### **School meals debt procedures implementation.**

#### **Level 1.**

A child's account goes into debt.

School will:

- Check if the child is on free school meals;
- Check if the child is having school dinners;
- Check that all payments have been credited;
- Check when a parent normally pays.

Should there be no reason:

The Class TA will remind parents by phone on Monday. If no monies are received by Tuesday then a text or letter 1 will sent and if appropriate. A free school meals form (FSM) will be sent home as well.

**Level 2.**

Overdue money is not received by the school.

School will:

- Ensure Level 1 checks have been completed;
- Log of phone conversation between TA and parent and that letter 1 has been sent;
- Send Overdue dinner money letter 2.

**Level 3.**

Overdue money is still not received.

School will:

- Ensure level 1 and 2 checks have been completed;
- Mrs K.L. Hall (Headteacher) will contact to parent/s to inform them that they will need to provide a packed lunch for their child until the debt is cleared;
- Follow up call with Overdue dinner money letter 3;
- Inform the Governors finance sub-committee.



# Marshside PRIMARY SCHOOL

Elswick Road, Southport. PR9 9XA

**Headteacher:** Mrs. Katharine L. Hall

**Tel:** 01704 211177

**Fax:** 01704 232699

**Email:** [admin@marshside.sefton.school](mailto:admin@marshside.sefton.school)

**Web:** <http://www.marshsideprimary.org.uk>

## Overdue dinner money letter 1.

Dear

Our records show that you have not paid dinner money for your child ..... in  
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 in to school tomorrow in a  
named envelope. Cheques must be made payable to **Sefton MBC.**

The cost of a school meal is £x.xx per day - £x.xx per week.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, or if you think your child may be eligible for free school  
meals, please contact me immediately

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K.L Hall  
Head teacher



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### Overdue dinner money letter 2.

Dear

Our records show that you have not paid dinner money for your child..... in Class..... despite contact and a previous letter.

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

Please arrange for this money to be paid on.....

Please send money in to school in a sealed envelope with your child's name written on. Cheques are to be made payable to **Sefton MBC**.

The cost of a school meal is £1.85 per day - £9.25 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. 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.

Please contact the school by ..... to arrange a meeting with Pauline Gerrard or myself to discuss a payment plan to help clear this debt.

Should no contact be made you will be required to provide a packed lunch until the debt is cleared. We have enclosed an application for free school meals, as you may be eligible.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K. L. Hall  
Headteacher



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### Overdue dinner money letter 3.

Dear

Our records show that you have not paid dinner money for your child..... in Class..... despite a telephone call and two previous letters.

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

In accordance with our school meals debt procedure, your child will not be provided with a school dinner as of .....until the debt is cleared. Please send money in to school in a sealed envelope with your child's name written on. Cheques are to be made payable to **Sefton MBC**.

Please ensure your child has a packed lunch, as this is your legal responsibility. Should you fail to provide a suitable packed lunch, then we shall have no option but to refer you to Social Care. Once the debt has been cleared, your child is welcome to resume school meals with payment in advance.

Please contact the school to discuss your school meals debt.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K.L. Hall  
Headteacher.

## **Out of hours club.**

This is a service that the school provides. It offers families wrap around care for their child / children. Unfortunately at this time there is no financial support for families wishing to use the service. Families are invoiced, and these clearly state the date by which payment is due.

### **Out of hours club debt procedures implementation.**

#### **Level 1.** Initial overdue payment reminder

When an invoice has not been paid by the stated date.

School will:

- Check if the child has the payment in their bag;
- Check if the child has handed it into the school office;
- Check that all payments have been credited;
- Check when a parent normally pays.

Should there be no reason an initial overdue payment reminder will be issued. (Verbal)

Mrs Murphy will verbally remind the parents when the child is dropped off or collected. The payment will be expected to be paid before the child uses the service again. This will be noted on the OoHC copy invoice.

#### **Level 2.** First overdue payment reminder letter.

Overdue money is still not received by the school after 1 week after the initial overdue payment reminder.

School will:

- Ensure Level 1 checks have been completed;
- Issue first overdue reminder letter.

#### **Level 3.** Second overdue payment reminder letter.

Overdue money is still not received by the school after 2 weeks after the initial overdue payment reminder.

School will:

- Ensure Level 1 checks have been completed;
- Mrs K. Hall (Headteacher) will contact parent/s by phone to inform them that until the debt was cleared, their child / children will not be able to use the OoHC;
- Follow up call with second overdue payment letter 2;
- Inform the members of the finance sub-committee.

Once the debt has been cleared, then use of the OoHC can resume.



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### **First overdue payment reminder letter for Out of hours club.**

Dear

Our records show that you have not paid the invoice for your child \_\_\_\_\_ in class \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ for the use of the school's out of hours club, despite a reminder on \_\_\_\_\_.

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

Please arrange for this money to be paid by \_\_\_\_\_. Cheques must be made payable to  
**Marshside Primary School.**

Should you wish to discuss these arrears further, please make an appointment at the school office.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K.L. Hall  
Headteacher



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### **Second overdue payment reminder letter for Out of hours club.**

Dear

Our records show that you have still not paid the invoice for your child \_\_\_\_\_ in class \_\_\_\_\_ for the use of the school's out of hours club, despite a previous written reminder and telephone call.

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

Please arrange for this money to be paid by \_\_\_\_\_. Cheques must be made payable to **Marshside Primary School.**

Since non-payment for the out of hours club affects the quality of service we offer to the children, we need to ensure that all payments are up to date. The school is not obliged to provide a place where payment is not forthcoming, and until this debt is cleared it will not be possible for us to provide your child \_\_\_\_\_ with a place at the club.

Please contact the school by \_\_\_\_\_ to arrange a meeting with myself to discuss a payment plan to help clear this debt.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact me immediately

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K.L. Hall  
Headteacher