



NORTHUMBERLAND HEATH PRIMARY SCHOOL

SCHOOL MEALS NO-DEBT PROCEDURE

Introduction

On 07/09/17, Northumberland Heath Primary School adopted a clear NO DEBT procedure 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 for school meals. Every parent/carer will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents give this procedure their full support.

No parent/carer would take their child to a restaurant 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 school office for an application form. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that you use it if you qualify.

Payment for School Meals

Parents/carers must pay in advance to the school by sending in cash or a cheque (made payable to Northumberland Heath Primary School) in a marked envelope or online via parent pay.

Payment must be paid on a Monday or on the first day back after a holiday for the week/term.

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 immediately and future meals must be paid in advance before any meal is provided.

If a debt is not cleared, parents/carers must provide a packed 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.

If a child has forgotten their packed lunch box, a school meal will not be available unless it has been paid for in the morning. If the parent has not sent in payment for a hot dinner, they will be called and asked to bring a packed lunch to school before lunchtime.

Parents will need to inform the school office if their child requires a school dinner, but will be arriving late due to an appointment, so that a meal can be ordered. If the school is not informed before 9.45am, then a meal will not be available for your child and a packed lunch must be provided.

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 Head Teacher 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.

Conclusion

We hope that by implementing this debt procedure 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 for children's learning is available.

This policy is reviewed annually.

APPENDIX 1

Parent/Carer of

Further to my telephone call today, our records show that you have not yet made a dinner money payment for your child.

Our records show a debt of £.....

This payment must be made immediately. Please send the payment in to school tomorrow in a marked envelope. The cost of a school meal is £2.20 per day/£11.00 per week.

If payment is not forthcoming, then the school will be unable to continue providing school dinners for your child, and you will need to provide a packed lunch until the debt is cleared.

May I finally remind you that payments must be made on a Monday or on the first day back after the school holiday if this falls on a different day.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately. I have attached a statement for your records.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S Gordon

Head Teacher

APPENDIX 2

Parent/Carer of

Despite previous correspondence, our records show that you have still not made a dinner money payment for your child.

As atour records show a debt of £.....

Please arrange for a payment to be made by The cost of a school meal is £2.20 per day/£11.00 per 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. Unfortunately, if payment is not forthcoming, then the school will be unable to continue providing school dinners for your child, and you will need to make your own arrangements for your child's lunch until the debt is cleared.

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. I have attached statement for your records.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S Gordon

Head Teacher