



Sigglesthorne Church of England (VC) Primary Academy

Policy Number - SIG 6

SCHOOL CHARGES IN ARREARS PROCEDURE

Signed: _____

Policy confirmed by the Governing Body of Sigglesthorne Church of England (VC) Primary Academy on:

Date: October 2023

Review Date: October 2026

Review: Every 3 years

This Policy recognises the difficulties placed on Sigglesthorne Church of England Primary Academy in balancing the social welfare of pupils to provide nourishing and healthy hot meals, with the management of the school budget.

We ask that each child's dinner money account be paid within 14 days of receipt of the Quickfile invoice either by BACS or by cash or cheque to the school office. If the account is in arrears and a school meal is booked the child will be provided with a school meal in good faith and on the assumption that payment along with any arrears will be made upon receipt of the invoice.

If school meal arrears are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money, which should be spent on children's education, is used to pay for debts incurred by parents/carers. This is unacceptable and we request that all parents/carers give this policy their full support.

Parents/carers whose child takes a school lunch must pay the relevant cost stated by the school's catering provider. Pupils may be eligible for free school meals where a parent / carer is in receipt of the following:

- Universal Credit, (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
- Child Tax Credit, provided you are also not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual household gross income that does not exceed £16,190 (as assessed by HMRC)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- A run-on of Working Tax Credit - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

Procedures for payment of arrears are as follows:

1. On the Wednesday of week one - a ParentHub message will be sent home advising of the arrears and requesting payment by the following Monday.
2. On the Monday of week two - an email will be sent outlining the outstanding invoices and the level of arrears, requesting payment is made by that Wednesday and that a packed lunch should be provided until the account has been settled and setting out the eligibility for receiving Free School Meals. Refer Parent/Carer to the ERYC website to make an application for FSM.
3. On the Thursday of week two - a telephone call will be made to the parent/carers requesting payment of the amount outstanding, requesting that a packed lunch is provided until the account is settled and to agree a payment plan.
4. On the Monday of week three - a second letter (Letter 2) will be sent home with the child advising of the level of arrears, requesting payment is made with immediate effect and that a packed lunch is provided until the account is cleared. The letter will also set out the eligibility for Free School Meals

and that the debt if not settled will be referred to the Ebor Finance Department.

5. Once all attempts to collect the outstanding dinner money have been exhausted and no payment plan or meeting with the parents/carers has been made the matter should be referred to the Finance Team at Ebor Academy Trust and the decision will be made as to whether legal action will be taken to recover the outstanding debt. The following details need to be provided:

- School Name
- Pupil Name (in full)
- Parents/Guardian name and address
- Arrears to be recovered
- Specific dates to which the arrears relate
- Statement printed out from Quickfile invoicing system, with details of meals taken
- Copy of correspondence sent to parents/carers

Arrears of Payment for Wrap Arounds Care

The Policy will also be used where arrears of payment for Breakfast and After Schools provision are prevalent. Parents/carers will be invoiced as above and if the account is in arrears and the clubs are urgently required parents/carers will be asked to send in the cash on booking on a 'pay as you go' basis until the arrears are cleared. Please speak to the school office if you have difficulty in meeting the payment to discuss a way forward.

Once all attempts to collect the outstanding ASC/Breakfast Club money have been exhausted and no payment plan or meeting with the parents/carers has been made the matter should be referred to the Finance Team at Ebor Academy Trust and the decision will be made as to whether legal action will be taken to recover the outstanding debt. The following details need to be provided:

- School Name
- Pupil Name (in full)
- Parents/Guardian name and address
- Arrears to be recovered
- Specific dates to which the arrears relate
- Statement printed out from Quickfile invoicing system, with details of meals taken
- Copy of correspondence sent to parents/carers

Where a pupil(s) transfer to another school, the school should contact the new school to advise them of the arrears on account at the school.

To be read in conjunction with the Trust's Charging and Remissions Policy.