



EDEN PARK ACADEMY

DINNER MONEY ARREARS POLICY

This Policy has been compiled recognising the difficulties placed on Headteachers in balancing the social welfare of pupils with the management of the school's budget.

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 debts incurred by parents which most people in the school community would feel was unacceptable.

The Governing Body is committed to a transparent, consistent and fair approach to the efficient operation of the school dinner system.

Aims of this document

1. To outline the school policy regarding school dinners;
 2. To present a workable, fair mechanism for the collection of dinner money;
 3. To work with parents to provide a flexible approach to the lunchtime nutritional needs of our children; provide a packed lunch or send payment for a school dinner
- Dinner money payments must be received in advance or on a daily basis rather than in arrears. Cheques, made payable to "Forches Cross Primary School", or cash payments are accepted. Dinner money payments should be sent to the class teacher to be dealt with at morning registration or alternatively payments can be made directly to the School Office
 - When a pupil has failed to produce dinner money, the school may allow a meal to be provided where it is felt that this is a temporary situation e.g. Money lost on the way to school, domestic problem etc. Parents will be contacted and the meal should be paid for at the next opportunity.
 - If a pupil arrives at school without a packed lunch, or if a pupil's free entitlement has expired, the school will telephone home in the first instance to establish if alternative arrangements have been made. If subsequently a meal is required then a letter will be sent detailing how much parents owe. Payment needs to be made at the next opportunity and can be sent into your child's class teacher or paid directly to the School Office.
 - Where payment is not made as requested above a reminder will be sent to the parent by the administrator. If payment is not forthcoming within 5 days of the contact the matter will be referred to the Headteacher. At this point a formal letter should be sent to the parent stating the amount of the arrears and requesting that

the child either brings a packed lunch to school or goes home for lunch until the debt is cleared.

- If in the opinion of the Headteacher failure to provide a meal could have serious consequences for that pupil, a meal should be provided and details recorded in writing to the parent and a copy kept as a record.
- If the problem persists an appointment with the Headteacher will be made to meet with the parent to discuss the situation. A date for the repayment of the debt should be agreed.
- The school will not tolerate debt amounting to more than one week (five days) payment, currently equating to £10.00 per week. This is per family and not per child. If a parent repeatedly fails to provide a packed lunch or sufficient monies to cover the costs of school dinners, this may be a matter for the Local Authority to pursue and advise the school on appropriate action.
- If the matter remains unresolved, the Headteacher and Governing Body will decide how to address the situation, which may include referring the debt onto a collection agency. If payments are received in the form of a cheque and this cheque is subsequently not honoured, further payments must be in cash.

NB. If you are experiencing hardship which affects your ability to pay for school dinners, you are invited to speak confidentially to the Headteacher.