



Debt Management Policy

September 2024

Approved by Governors:	Date:	
Signature of Governor	Name:	Signature:
Date for Review	September 2025	

This policy has been created to ensure the appropriate procedures are in place to deal with debts and the recovery of assets. It encompasses all debts owed to the School, Robin Hood Primary School, including but not limited to, payment for goods, services, school trips and school meal payments. The Governing Body has a duty to ensure the School receives all funds due so that neither the School nor its stakeholders are disadvantaged.

This policy has been written in recognition of the difficulties we face in balancing the social welfare of pupils in our care with the responsibility of managing the School Budget. The Debt Management policy aims to reduce the risks of parents/carers incurring large debts that they may struggle to pay at a future date and to help identify any financial hardships facing our families so that we can make appropriate interventions to support them. This policy will also help us to minimise the amount of staff time taken to chase outstanding payments. The consistent and fair approach identified in this policy will help parents and carers to understand the School's procedure and what is expected of them. Any debt incurred by the school, whether small or large, has to be reimbursed from the school budget. This limits spending in other areas to the detriment of the school's educational provision in the long term.

The School's preferred method of payments is via Arbor. The School does not accept cash payments.

Chargeable Services

Hot Meals

Robin Hood Primary School has a duty to provide free school meals to pupils in F2, Year 1 and Year 2, but there is no obligation beyond this. If arrears exist, the School can refuse to continue to provide hot meals.

Free Meal Qualification:

We understand that families occasionally come into financial difficulty and always aim to support parents and carers with payment of school meals where possible. If you think you may be entitled to free school meals we can help you to apply for this via the school office.

Universal Infant Free School Meals

Pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to receive a Universal Infant Free School Meal under a government grant. Once pupils reach Year 3, parents will be required to pay for school meals unless they meet the Free School Meal criteria.

Payments for School Meals

Parents and carers must pay for school meals by paying on your child's school Arbor account. School meals are £2.70 per day and nursery meals are £2.45 per day. We do not expect all meals to be paid for in advance but we do expect payments to be made regularly to your child's Arbor account. This may be daily, weekly or monthly.

Residential Trips

All residential trips are payable in advance.

Trips/Activities

Where school activities take place, and parents consent to send their children on them, for example, residential trips/extended day trips, they are expected to pay in full for the trip in advance of the trip taking place.

Offsetting of Income

If a parent owes money to the school, but is in credit with another activity, for example the parent has paid for a trip which is subsequently cancelled, the school has the right to offset some/or all of the credit towards settlement of the debt before issuing any refunds to the parent. Similarly, if a parent is in debt for an activity, i.e. music tuition or a residential trip, but then pays for an alternative item, such as another school trip, the School reserves the right to offset the income to the previous debt.

Year 6/Mid-year Leavers

Where debts occur at the end of the summer term, and remain unpaid when the child leaves the School, Robin Hood Primary School will pass the debt to younger siblings if they are still on roll at the School. Debts which remain if a child leaves the school will be pursued via email/letter and passed to debt collection agency.

Payment Plan

When payments agreed in the Payment Plan (sufficient enough to cover the ongoing costs and pay off past debts) are made on time, the service provision will continue. If regular payments are not made, the plan will be withdrawn.

Below is our process for recovery of school debts effective from September 2024:

	Meals	Breakfast Club	After School Care
	Informal Reminders via text and email	Informal Reminders via text and email	Informal Reminders via text and email
	If debt reaches £-25.00 you will be emailed by the school office asking you to please top up your account	If debt reaches £-25.00 you will be emailed by the school office asking you to please top up your account	If debt reaches £-25.00 you will be emailed by the school office asking you to please top up your account
Letter 1	If a school meal debt reaches £-54.00 you will be sent a letter to arrange a payment plan	If a child's Breakfast club account reaches £-60.00 and a payment plan hasn't been put in place you will no longer be able to use our Breakfast club	If a child's After School Care account reaches £-140.00 and a payment plan hasn't been put in place you will no longer be able to use our After School Care.
Letter 2	If a school meal debt reaches £-100.00 we will ask that you send a child with a packed lunch until the debt is cleared or a payment plan is put in place		

If there is a combined debt of £-250.00 over your child's accounts and there is no payment plan put in place you will not be able to use any of the above services.

Legal action

Please note that the Headteacher and Governing Body reserves the right to take legal action to recover debts.

Robin Hood Primary hopes that by implementing this policy we are able to help parents to manage school payments better; consequently, we will be able to ensure that all public funds received by the school are properly allocated and spent appropriately.

Parents will be asked annually to indicate on their Arbor profile that they have understood this debt management policy and agree to the content.