



Extended Services
Debt
Policy

Document Control

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Background

The Wirksworth Federation of Infant Schools (the Federation) Extended Services Debt Policy has been adopted to ensure a consistent and fair approach to debt incurred by parents/carers whose children attend extended services provision. The Local Authority (LA) is not accountable for the administration of extended services, therefore responsibility falls on the Federation to pursue instances of non-payment. As a result the Federation budget will have to directly fund any outstanding debts that cannot be recovered thereby directly affecting the amount of money that is available to provide education to all children.

Provision of extended services

The extended services provision is no different to any other business in that it has to be paid for by someone. This provision is available to children, but at a cost to the parent/carer.

Cost of extended services

This provision is available to children at a cost of £5.50 per morning session and £9.50 per afternoon session (discounted rates are available as follows: children who attend three or more morning sessions a week and siblings attending the same morning session - £5.00; children who attend three or more afternoon sessions a week and siblings attending the same afternoon session - £9.00). Any revision to extended services prices will be notified to parents/carers the term prior to the new charge taking effect.

Payment for extended services

Payment will be invoiced half termly and can be paid by cash, cheque (made payable to Derbyshire County Council) or through a childcare voucher scheme. Payment must be received within 7 days of the issue of the invoice. If you only use the service occasionally payment must be on the day of use. The Federation will ensure that all extended services money collected is banked in a timely manner in accordance with the Federation's Financial Regulations which are periodically inspected by audit.

Management of extended services

To ensure that the Federation's budget is not adversely affected by the cost of providing extended services, the Governors consider the fairest system to all families is to pursue a 'Zero Tolerance' approach. Although this may seem harsh

to some parents/carers, it is important that the extended services provision does not run at a loss otherwise the school budget will be affected to the detriment of all our children.

Invoices for outstanding payments will be issued on a monthly basis and full payment must be received within 7 days of the invoice date. The same process will be used if a cheque is not honoured by the bank. Prompt action will be taken to address any debt issue at an early stage in order to prevent arrears amassing.

Where a child continues to require this provision, the Federation must establish if the parent/carer is experiencing hardship which affects their ability to pay. Under these circumstances the parent/carer should be invited to speak confidentially to the Headteacher.

When payment is overdue by 7 days for a *child or family* a formal letter must be sent to the parent/carer informing them of their required actions.

If payment is overdue by 14 days for a child or family and/or action proves unsuccessful in securing extended services money arrears, the Federation will write to the parent/carer, explaining that the Federation is not obliged to provide extended services provision where advance payment is not forthcoming.

If fees remain outstanding for more than two weeks from the date of the invoice, advance payment will be required for any further booked sessions to secure a place for the child, otherwise the child will not be able to attend.

Monitoring and recovery of extended services debts

At each meeting of the Resource Committee, the Headteacher will provide Governors with details of any outstanding extended services debt and the current/profiled position with regard to the overall profit or loss of the provision. If the provision is running at a loss, the Governors then will have to decide on the existence of the provision in the Federation. The aim of this policy is to minimise the opportunity for debt balances to build up and incurring costly referral to the Federation's solicitors. The Federation does, however, reserve the right to begin legal proceedings to recover outstanding extended services debts and inform the LA, Legal Services.

Where full or part payment for extended services is to be made via voucher scheme, regular reconciliations should be performed to ensure all monies due are received from the voucher company to avoid the commencement of action with the parent/carer should there be a delay in payment from the company.

All write-offs of outstanding debt must be approved by the Governing Body/Resource Committee following submission of details of the debt by the Headteacher, together with reasons for no further action being taken.

Monitoring and review

The Headteacher monitors and reports to the Governing Body on the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis and makes recommendations for further improvements.

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with the Federation's monitoring and review cycle. The Governing Body may, however, review the policy earlier than this in response to new regulations or if they receive recommendations on how the policy might be improved.