

St John the Baptist C.E. Primary School

Debt Recovery Policy

Agreed by Resources committee 13 September 2018

Statement of Intent

The Governing Body is committed to taking all reasonable measures to collect debts as part of its management of public funds. A debt will be written off only after all reasonable measures (commensurate with the size and nature of the debt) have been taken to recover it.

Aims

1. To ensure that the school is not financially disadvantaged by the actions of an individual or group of individuals.
2. To safeguard the School's funds and specifically to ensure that no individual or group of individuals take advantage of the school causing it to be unable to recover funds that are owed to it.
3. To ensure that the funds available to the School are used to the fullest advantage of all pupils.

It is the responsibility of the Finance Officer to ensure the following procedures are in place for the prompt payment of all charges raised by the school:

- All income to the School is to be banked using the normal HCC bank paying in books and recorded on SAP through REM banking
- The County SAP income and billing module should be used to raise invoices for all Community lettings, charges etc
- The Finance Officer will provide the Headteacher and Governors with an up to date outstanding debtors report at least once per term to Resources committee

Procedures for recovery of outstanding debts are as follows:

- In the first instance, the debtor will be given a polite 'overdue' reminder
- If debt remains outstanding after two weeks, debtor will be advised of debt recovery action
- In exceptional circumstances where a debt remains outstanding, the school will respond as follows:
 - A maximum of £20 outstanding will be permitted after which no meals will be available for a child. The parent/carer will be notified of the situation

- Where tuition fees remain unpaid by the specified date, the place is forfeited and offered to another pupil (unless payment plan has been agreed)
- Where residential trip fees not paid in full by the specified date, participation is forfeited.
- Hiring of facilities will be suspended if payment is outstanding

Refunds of part payments made will be at the discretion of Headteacher.

- Copies of all correspondence/contact to be retained on file
- 'Debtor' in this policy refers to an individual family

Debtors are expected to settle the amount owed by a single payment as soon as possible after receiving the first 'overdue reminder'.

If a debtor asks for 'repayment terms' these may be negotiated at the discretion of the Headteacher or Finance Officer or other responsible person.

Where the School incurs material additional costs in recovering a debt, recovery of such costs may be sought from the debtor.

At the discretion of the Headteacher, the debtor may be advised that they will be required to pay in advance for all future supplies/services etc or they will no longer be available to them.

Any hirer of school facilities who has unrecoverable debts to the school will be banned from future hirings.

Good practice in school

School meals ~Must be paid for in advance of taking the meal.

Tuition fees ~ must be paid by specified date (unless payment plan agreed in advance)

Residential trips~ payment by instalments option will be made available. All payments must be complete by the specified final date.

Hiring facilities~ payment must be made by specified date

The school's preferred option is for online payment via the Tucasi system

The school will actively pursue debtors

The school will keep and maintain accurate records of payment and receipt. Receipts will be issued for all payments.

The school will keep and maintain accurate records of request for money in cases of debt recovery

The governors must approve the arrangements for debt recovery

The governors must expect the school to undertake legal action where appropriate

The governors will ensure that the identity of a family involved is only disclosed to those who need to know under this policy

The governors will not write-off any debt belonging to the school which exceeds £1000. Any sums above this will be referred to the local authority. The Headteacher is authorised to write-off debts up to £200. Debts between £200 and £1000 may only be written off with the written approval of the Resources Committee

A formal record of any debts written off will be maintained and retained for seven years.

The governors will delegate its responsibilities under this policy to the Resources Committee

Policy approved at Resources meeting 17 January 2013.

Reviewed at ~Resources committee 11 September 2014

Reviewed at ~Resources committee 14 January 2016

Reviewed at Resources committee meeting 15 September 2016

Reviewed at Resources meeting 14 September 2017

Reviewed at Resources meeting 13 September 2018