

# LANDYWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL



## **School Meals Debt Policy**

**October 2018**

This policy has been adopted by Landywood Primary to achieve a consistent approach to debt and provides clarity and consistency in managing debt, helping parents clearly understand what is expected of them. 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 for debts incurred by parents. Every parent will agree that this is unacceptable and we ask that all parents give this policy their full support.

There have been many discussions around whether a child should be refused a meal in school if parents have not paid. The school meals service is no different than any other business and the meals must be paid for by someone. Parents can easily relate to the situation that they cannot take their child to a restaurant and expect them to be given food without paying.

The Free School Meals system is there for parents who struggle to pay for school meals, so there should be no exceptions to paying. Applying for Free School Meals is straight forward and parents can do so over the telephone (0300 111 8007) or by visiting <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/educationalawardsbenefits/FreeSchoolMeals/home.aspx>. Assuming eligibility is authorised, the child can take a free school meal the following school day.

At Landywood all school lunches must be paid for in advance. No child should be sent to school without money in their account and parents expect them to be given a meal. Parents who do not want their child to have a school lunch, should provide a healthy packed lunch or arrange to take them home for lunch.

If a child's account does not have any credit in it, the child will be given a school meal and school will send a text reminder to the family. Parents will be asked to ensure money is paid into the account ready for the next day's school meal.

If the following day, money is still not in the account, school will telephone the parent to inform them their child will be provided with a school meal, but the account requires money paying into it, to ensure it is always in credit.

If the next day the account has not received payment, the child will be given a school meal and a letter sent home informing the parents the account must receive an immediate payment.

If, after three requests, the account is still not in credit, the family will be informed that we have been unable to resolve the concerning situation and that school has no choice other than to share their concerns with First Response/Social Services as parents are not carrying out their basic responsibility of care, by providing food for their children at lunchtime.

This policy is to be read alongside Landywood's debt recovery policy if further guidance is needed. Failure to pay for any provision in school, whether school meals, wrap around or music/sports lessons, could result in future withdrawals or refusals from school's services.