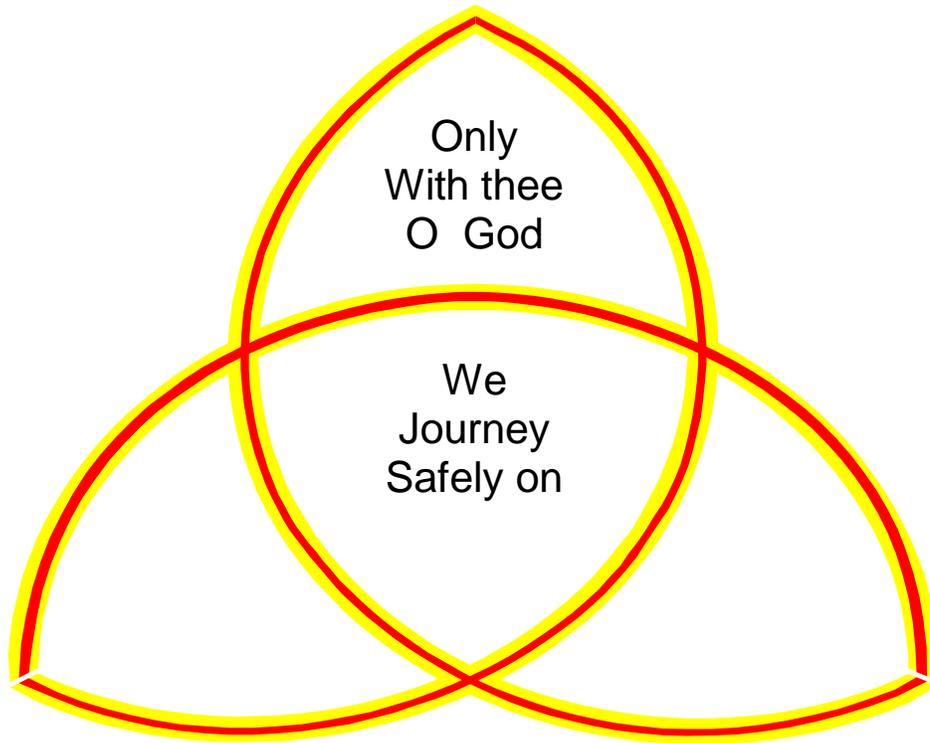


Holy Trinity CE Junior School



Policy for:

**School Meals Debt Policy for
Parents**

Written by:

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Cookson**

Date Reviewed:

June 2017

Review Date:

June 2020

Policy

School Meals Debt Policy for Parents

Principles

Holy Trinity Church of England Junior School supports the principle that money should be well managed so that the children benefit from the school's budget within the principles of equal opportunities. This encompasses the view that school dinners should be paid for, and in advance as this is good practice. This means that all other budgets remain in place to fund the children's education and wellbeing of all the children (rather than having to divert funds to pay for debt accrued).

Aims

1. That all money for school meals is paid in advance.
2. If debt is accrued for more than five days it will be investigated and the school will seek to begin debt recovery proceedings with the parents
3. If there are circumstances of hardship these will be dealt with compassionately at the same time as debt retrieval being pursued.

Practice

a) Where a child is not entitled to a free school meal.

To receive a school lunch the meal must be paid for in advance

Parents and carers need to pay in advance for school meals using the payment methods outlined below:

- Credit/Debit cards online using ParentPay

PayPoint cards or barcoded letter If a parent genuinely forgets to pay in advance, the school may grant a debt allowance of 1 meal, however this debt must be paid immediately using the payment methods above together with a sum for future meals otherwise the School will be unable to provide further meals.

If there are continually insufficient funds on a child's ParentPay account by more than 5 meals, then parents will be required to provide a packed lunch for their child. If there is insufficient credit on a child's account and a packed lunch has not been provided, the School Office will contact the parent on the day to ask them what arrangements they have made to provide their child with food.

b) Where a child is entitled to a free school meal ?? is this up to date?

If parents believe that their children may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals then they should contact the office for further information who will give them a leaflet on how to apply online at www.sutton.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals or call the Housing Benefit service on 020 8770 6953. Free school meal entitlement will only apply from the date the evidence has been received and the application has been approved, it cannot be backdated. Please note it is the parent's responsibility to inform the school should their entitlement cease.) **Debt recovery proceedings**

If payment of the debt is not received by the **fifth** day, the School reserves the right to begin debt management proceedings against parents to recover the debt. If debts are incurred, then the School firstly send a text message alerting them to the fact that their child is overdrawn on their dinner account. If the debt remains unpaid the School will telephone the parent to discuss the debt, the circumstances leading to the debt and work with parents to implement a plan to recover the debt and make a time-bonded plan.

We hope that by implementing this debt policy we are able to help parents manage school dinner money better and at the same time ensure that all money that is for children's learning is available.

The School will not pass onto the debtor any costs incurred in pursuing the outstanding debt.

If parents do not co-operate with this approach nor show any willingness to pay back the debt, the school will send the debtor as a minimum a final statement, which states that this is the final notice and that further action will be taken. Legal action will then be pursued in conjunction with the South London Legal Partnership and or Small Claims Court.

Monitoring and evaluation

The school office staff and the School Business Manager will inform the head teacher of any debts incurred on a regular basis. Termly at the Finance & Premises Committee the School Business Manager and head teacher will report on any significant debts over £50 that may exist and the likelihood of recovering them. This will be done confidentially and in accordance with equal opportunities.

Reviewed by Finance and Premises Committee:
Next Review Date:

13th June 2017
Summer 2020