

## **Policy: Debt Policy**

**Date: October 2025**

**Review date: October 2027**

**Authorised by: Governing Body**

**Updated by: School Business Manager**

### **Working in Partnership with Families**

At Dunalley Primary School, we aim to work closely with families to support the management of school-related expenses while ensuring that all funds intended for children's learning are fully available.

We understand that some families may be experiencing significant financial pressures; however, it is essential that all resources are directed towards providing the best possible education for our pupils.

With this in mind, we have revised our school debt policy relating to chargeable services provided by the school. This includes school meals (for junior children) and services offered by associated committees such as Dunalley Nursery & Pre-School and Earlyies and Lates (our before and after school club provision), as well as any other charges agreed by parents/carers.

### **School Meals Debt Policy for families of Junior aged Children**

*Infant children automatically qualify for Universal Infant Free School Meals as part of the Government's initiative to provide every child in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 with a nutritious meal at lunch time.*

No parent would take their child to a restaurant and expect them to be given food without paying; the same applies at school. If our families believe that their children may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals, they should contact the office for more details. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that you use it if you qualify. The school will help you all we can with your application.

Families are required to pay for school meals through SchoolGrid. This platform also provides access to the current menu from our caterers, Dolce Ltd. SchoolGrid is the system used for both ordering and payment.

If payment has not been received children may not be provided with a school meal except those that are in receipt of free school meals. If families genuinely forget to pay in online, the school may authorise a debt allowance of 1 meal, via SchoolGrid. However, this debt must be paid the next day.

If the debt is not cleared, families must either provide a packed lunch or take the child home for lunch. In a case when a debt payment is not received via SchoolGrid, nor a packed lunch provided, the School Business Manager or a representative will contact the parent/carer to ask them to pay online immediately. Otherwise they must provide sandwiches before lunch time or arrange to take their child home for lunch.

In cases where parents/carers persistently do not pay the school reserves the right to inform the Local Authority and Social Services that these parents/carers are not carrying out the responsibility of providing food for their children at lunchtime, the school also reserves the right to begin legal proceedings against parents to recover the debt.

### **Dunalley Nursery & Pre-School Policy for our families**

Families will be invoiced for sessions and any associated costs by The Nursery & Pre-School. The invoice will include terms and details for payments.

- Via BACS payment

Payments will not be accepted at The Nursery & Pre-School.

### **Earlies and Lates Policy for our families**

Families must pay in advance for Earlies, Lates and holiday club using the method of payment outlined below:

- Online using ParentPay

Payments will not be accepted at the clubs.

Children will NOT be permitted to attend our clubs unless the session has been booked and paid for in advance in accordance with the clubs Registration Form and Agreement which has been signed and agreed to.

If a family genuinely forgets to pay in advance, the school may grant a debt allowance of 1 session. However, this debt must be paid the next day and future sessions must be paid for in advance.

If the debt is not cleared any sessions booked will be withdrawn.

### **Thank You for Your Support**

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in helping us maintain a fair and sustainable approach to school finances. By working together, we can ensure that every penny is used to provide the best possible education and opportunities for all our pupils.

If you have any questions or require support regarding this policy, please do not hesitate to contact the School Business Manager.