



Dinner Money Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out the rules and procedures for the payment and collection of dinner money at Castle Academy.

Debt Policy

The school will actively seek to recover any debt incurred as a result of non-payment or arrears.

School meals must be paid for in advance via Parent Pay. When payment for school meals have not been received in advance, the following procedure applies:

- **Informal Reminder** - In the first instance, parents are to be informed by App/Text/Email/Phone or by Person that there is no fund in their account. The parents are requested to bring a packed lunch for the child.
- If a packed lunch is not brought in and in exceptional circumstances then a meal is to be provided by the Academy, parents will be asked to pay for the meal at the end of the school day or beginning of the next day
- If the payment is not made, parents are asked to ensure the child brings a packed lunch until the outstanding debt has been repaid
- **First Formal Reminder Letter** - If the debt remains unpaid for two days after the informal reminder, a formal letter will be sent requesting for immediate payment. The child should continue to bring a packed lunch.
- **Second Formal Reminder Letter** - If payment is still not made by the end of the week, then a second formal reminder letter will be issued. The child should continue to bring a packed lunch.
- **Payment Plan** - If the debt continues more than two weeks and is greater than £10, attempts should be made to agree a payment plan with the parents to prevent further debt incurring and bring the arrears up to date. The payment plan should include details of timescale and amount to be repaid at each instalment. If payments are made on time and the account is topped up, then the service could be resumed
- **Legal Action** – If the debt continues to increase and there is no attempt by the parents to resolve the outstanding balance and a payment plan is not agreed. The Principal should consider the possibility of legal action should the debt continue to be incurred and the outstanding balance is not repaid within one month
- Only once the outstanding debt has been repaid and the Parent Pay account

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is topped up in advance, then the child could continue to access the school service

- For Year 6 children moving to Year 7, parents should ensure that all outstanding debt is paid for prior to leaving school.

Changes to dinners

- In the event of any changes to dinner bookings including an absence, appointments during dinner or a change to a packed lunch the school must be advised by 9am that morning and updated no later than 9am the Friday of that week or parents will still be charged for the meal. Any change requests from previous weeks will still result in the parent being charged.
- For advanced notifications of any appointments or in the event of a child being sent home, we will remove the dinner for you, however politely request you remind us where possible to ensure the meal is removed in time.

Free School Meals

- Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils are entitled to free school meals through the Universal Infant School Meal Scheme (UFSM).
- If you have confirmed your family is entitled to free school meals the entitlement will not start until the school has been notified by the Local Authority of entitlement.
- If your children are entitled to free school meals but choose to provide your child with a packed lunch you must notify the office when you are changing from one to another.

Parents/Carers who are in receipt of certain benefits, may be entitled to free school meals. If you think you may be entitled to free school meals please apply online at <https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/doitonline/free-school-meals>

Further information on School Meals

- The cost of a school meal is currently £2.50 per day = £12.50 per week
- We request that all parents give this policy their full support. If debts are incurred, school has to pay for the meals eaten. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education has to be used for debts incurred by parents. Please consider – no-one could take a child to a restaurant and expect them to be given food without paying – the same applies to our school.
- We hope that by implementing this policy we are able to help parents better manage school dinner money. Please retain this policy for your information.

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