



# **Policy for the Recovery of Unpaid Dinner Monies**

## Background

Parents are asked to pay for school meals in advance directly to the school using the School Money online payment service.

Prior to April 2017 the local authority would endeavour to recover non-payment of dinner monies free of charge and stand any resulting financial loss on behalf of a school as part of the service level agreement. Since April 2017 schools have become responsible for recovering these debts, any unrecovered amounts being a cost to the school.

The local authority will attempt to recover non-payment but each request will now cost £35.

## Policy

In response to this change and to reduce the cost to the school we have introduced the following:

- After two weeks' arrears have accumulated, we will contact the parent by text using our school money service requesting payment of the outstanding amount and informing the parent that their child should bring sandwiches for lunch until the debt is paid. The text will be sent on the Thursday of the second week.
- If payment is not received by the following Monday, we will telephone the parent requesting immediate payment and will also inform them that their child should remain on packed lunches until full payment is received.
- If a parent continues to refuse to provide a packed lunch for their child, they will be asked to attend a meeting with the headteacher to discuss the situation. The headteacher will remind the parent that failure to provide lunch for a child could become a safeguarding matter.
- If the debt remains unpaid at the end of the next half term, it will be referred to Tameside MBC for collection.
- A statement asking any parent experiencing financial hardship to contact the school is on the school website under the School Money section.

Signed .....Date ..... (Chair of Governors)

Signed .....Date ..... (Headteacher)