



# Dinner Money Debt Policy

<b>Owner</b>	Sarah Williams
<b>Date reviewed</b>	January 2024
<b>Approved by</b>	Finance & Resources Committee
<b>Date approved</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
<b>Date of next review</b>	January 2027

Version Control	
Date	Change
17/01/24	New format and streamlined
17/01/24	Added Version Control and Contents sections
17/01/24	2. Removed option to pay by cash or cheque
17/01/24	3. Included link to Bolton Councils Free School Meals web page
17/01/24	4. Updated communication methods to include email as well as ParentApp message
17/01/24	5. Changed number of days from 14 days to 30 days when Headteacher would refer debt to Bolton Council's debt collection department

## Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Payment of School Dinners .....	3
3. Free School Meals .....	3
4. Non-Payment .....	3
5. Consequences of Non-Payment .....	3
6. Conclusion .....	4

## **1. Introduction**

This policy is about the collection of school dinner money and the approach to be taken in the case of debts arising when parents/carers fail to pay for school dinners.

Beaumont Primary School implement a strict debt policy relating to the payment of school dinners as if debts are incurred 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/carers. Every parent/carer will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents/carers give this policy their full support.

*No parent/carer would take their child to a restaurant and expect them to be given food without paying; the same applies at school.*

## **2. Payment for School Dinners**

Parents/Carers must pay in advance for school dinners using the Payment section on our ParentApp either weekly, monthly, half termly or termly.

## **3. Free School Meals**

Free School Meals are an income related benefit, and if parents/carers believe that their children may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals they must apply via Bolton Councils Free School Meals website page:

<https://www.bolton.gov.uk/free-school-meals-clothing-allowance>

For further information or any assistance applying please contact the school office.

This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that parents/carers use it if they qualify.

## **4. Non-Payment**

If the weekly payment for school dinners is not received by Friday of the first week, parent/carers will be notified by ParentApp message or email.

If dinner money debt accumulates above two weeks, this is not acceptable, and therefore, parents/carers owing two weeks of dinner monies they will be asked to provide their child with a packed lunch the following week (third week) by phone, email or ParentApp message.

## **5. Consequences of Non-Payment**

If payment of the debt is not received within 30 days, the Head Teacher reserves the right to refer the debt to Bolton Council's debt collection department.

Children's Services may also be informed that these parents/carers are not carrying out the responsibility of care by not providing food for their children at lunchtime. It is not the responsibility of the School to provide lunch for pupils. It is the responsibility of

the parents/carers to provide a meal: either a school dinner or a packed lunch from home.

## **6. Conclusion**

We hope that by implementing this Dinner Money Debt Policy:

- we are able to ensure parents/carers manage school dinner money effectively;
- we are able to ensure that school is not using money that should be spent on children's education on paying parents/carers debt;
- we reduce the administration time and costs involved chasing dinner money debts,
- we ensure that all monies for children's learning is available for that purpose.