St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

School Meals & Wraparound Care Costs

ARREARS POLICY 2026-27

Introduction

This policy relates to the collection of school meals money, Breakfast & Afterschool clubs and the approach to be taken in the case of debts arising when parents/carers fail to pay for school meals and wraparound care.

If debts are incurred, then the school budget is liable to cover the cost of this. As a result, money which should be spent on all pupils' education in school is used to pay for debts incurred by individual parents/guardians. The governing body see this as unacceptable and request that all parents/guardians give this policy their full support.

Parents/guardians *can view this policy on the schools website.*

General Principle

- School meals must be paid for on the Arbor system. School meals are available to pupils at a cost of *£3.00 per day*, £15 for a full week or at no cost to those in receipt of targeted free school meals, Expanded Free School Meals or Universal Infant Free School Meals (Reception, Year 1 and 2). Payment should be made on a weekly basis.
- Childcare sessions may be booked in advance for your convenience but your account must be in credit to book the required number of sessions unless you are a user of Child Care Vouchers.
- Payment should be made *via school's electronic payment* system Arbor. We are no longer able to accept cash payments for wraparound care. However, as an exception, we can accept cash payments for school dinners.

Free School Meals Entitlement

Pupils, unless confirmed as entitled to free school meals or Universal Infant Free School Meals, must pay for their meals. If parents/guardians believe that their child(ren) may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals, they should apply to the County Council, as this allowance is a statutory right for qualifying pupils, it is important that parents/guardians make use of it.

The school is only allowed to provide free school meals to pupils where this is officially approved and the school informed by the Local Authority.

Procedure for Collection of Arrears for school Meals

It is accepted that on occasion arrears may arise for various reasons, however, arrears cannot be allowed to accumulate. The governing body has therefore agreed the following policy where arrears arise.

1. An outstanding dinner money email/In-App message will be sent to parent/guardian after *1 week* of accumulated arrears, requesting immediate payment.

2. If unpaid, an accumulated dinner money arrears letter will be sent when *3 weeks'* arrears or £45 has accumulated, advising immediate payment.

3. If unpaid, a final letter for non-payment of dinner money arrears will be sent informing the debtor that no further meals will be provided for their child(ren). If payment has not been received 5 working days after the second request for payment letter was sent. This letter will also advise that an LCC Invoice will be issued that would be subject to LCC Debt Recovery Policy.

4. No meals to be provided to pupils when arrears exceed *5 weeks*.

5. Once the final letter deadline has expired an LCC Invoice may be issued therefore being subject to LCC Debt Recovery Policy where legal proceedings may commence.

Procedure for Collection of Arrears for Wraparound Care Session

1. It is highly unlikely due to the booking system operation, that non-voucher users will incur a debt. However, this can happen when last minute bookings are taken over the telephone or if the booker is a user of child care vouchers. The school budget cannot subsidise childcare for any families. The governing body has therefore agreed the following policy where arrears arise.
2. An outstanding balances email will be sent to parents/guardians after 5 (£38.75) sessions of unpaid afterschool care has been taken or 5 (£18.75) sessions of before school care has been taken or where there is a debt combination for both clubs reaches £50 incurred. This email will be requesting immediate payment.
3. If sessions are unpaid after 2 weeks or 10 sessions or where the debt has reached £100, an accumulated arrears letter will be sent, advising immediate payment.
4. If unpaid, a final letter non-payment of arrears will be sent informing them that no further childcare will be provided for their child(ren). If payment has not been received 5 working days after the second request for payment letter was sent. This letter will also advise that an LCC Invoice will be issued that would be subject to LCC Debt Recovery Policy.
5. All further booked sessions will be cancelled and no further bookings will be permitted until the account arrears are cleared.
6. Once the final letter deadline has expired an LCC Invoice may be issued therefore being subject to LCC Debt Recovery Policy where legal proceedings may commence.