



Introduction to the Policy

This policy is subject to and functions within the St Stephen's CE Primary School Policies Framework, which applies with this policy at all times. All policies are accessible to:

- All staff (permanent, temporary, supply teaching and non-teaching, and otherwise)
- Advisors/inspectors
- Parents/carers (on website or request)
- The School Governors

All permanent staff have access at any time to a printed copy and to a copy saved on the school computer system. Statutory policies can be downloaded from the school website: <http://www.st-stephens.lambeth.sch.uk/>

Aims

Any money owed to school has an impact on the budget and may affect the resources we can provide to all children. We hope that parents understand this and will make every effort to avoid owing the school money. The school's policy and procedure for dealing with debts includes matters relating to school meals, Breakfast Club and Afterschool Clubs.

The school will actively pursue the collection of monies owed to it.

The school's debt recovery policy will observe the relevant financial regulations and guidance set out in the Scheme for Financing Schools and any other legal requirements.

Administrative Procedures

Weekly checks will be made by the Administrative Officer via the online payment system used by the school (Parentmail) to ascertain whether there are any outstanding payments.

There is documentary evidence of all the steps undertaken by the school to recover the debt. This includes recording the dates that reminders were distributed, and/or phone calls made to debtors.

For all outstanding debts, a final statement is issued to all persons liable for the charge. This statement must state "further action will be taken if this account remains outstanding after a period of no less than 10 days".

Where the debt for school meals has reached a total of £20, the account will be frozen, parents will be contacted in writing and by text message and no further hot meals, Breakfast Club or Afterschool Clubs will be given until the debt has been cleared.

Governing Body Responsibilities

The Governing Body must:

- Consider the arrangements for debt recovery.
- Recommend the maximum level of debt which any family would be able to incur.
- Approve the school undertaking legal action.
- Ensure the anonymity of the families involved is preserved at all times.

Pursuance of Debt

The School should not pass onto the debtor any costs incurred in pursuing the outstanding debt.

The school must give the debtor appropriate notification and time to pay the outstanding charge.

The school must send the debtor a final statement, which states that this is the final notice and that further action will be taken.

Waiving of Debt

The Headteacher can waive or reduce the debt, where it is shown that the debtor is experiencing financial hardship.

A debt may be written off by resolution of the Governing Body on the recommendation of the Headteacher.

A recommendation to write off a debt can be made when all reasonable avenues to recover the debt have been exhausted, and where it is not cost effective to pursue the debt through legal action.

Any action related to an outstanding debt or the waiving/reducing of a debt should be dealt with confidentially between the debtor and the Headteacher.

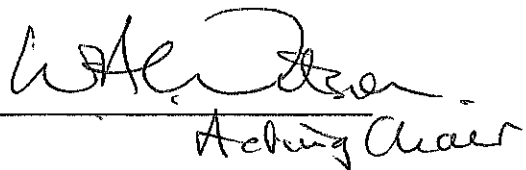
AUTHORISED BY:

Agreed by Governors

(Chair Signature):

Date Signed: 8th December 2017

Policy Due for Review: September 2019



Acting Chair