

The William Amory Primary School

School Debt Policy

Introduction

The school's governing body has a responsibility to have a debt recovery policy which ensures that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school to receive all income to which it is entitled.

Aims and Objectives

To ensure that the governing body complies with the Staffordshire Scheme for Financing Schools and Financial Regulations;

To protect the delegated school budget;

To apply this policy consistently to ensure debt is dealt with in a timely manner;

To ensure further goods or services are not supplied to parents/carers or customers who have not paid for items already received or used.

The debt recovery process

The William Amory Primary School has their own procedures in place which are used to collect income. However, in the event that payment is not forthcoming then an official invoice will be raised on the County Council's finance system which will lead to the Council's debt recovery procedures as follows:

- Invoice raised with payment terms of 28 days
- A reminder is sent 3 days after the 28 days has expired
- A final notice is issued before the school can request the debt recovery officer to contact the parent/carer/customer at their home/ business address (minimum value £150) or the matter referred onto the courts (minimum value £250).

Nursery/Wrap Around Care

School aim to invoice parents on the first working day of the month with the fees for that month. Accounts are monitored during the month and invoices resent, if necessary, to those who still have outstanding balances. If accounts are not settled the school may give notice to withdraw the care being provided and debt recovery procedures will begin as detailed above.

Dinner Money

Payment for school meals should be paid in advance via Parent Pay. The school office will reconcile the payments received to the meals ordered and any discrepancy will in the first instance result in a text to the parent/carer to request payment. Any parent/carer that has not made payment by the end of the week will be contacted requesting immediate payment.

Governors have decided on the following policy regarding unpaid meals:

- A meal will be served until the arrears reach £20 after which point no further meals will be served
- In the final term of Year 6, no arrears will be permitted, and all meals must be paid for in advance. This is to prevent children leaving school at the end of Year 6 with money still owing on their accounts.

If payment is still not received within 5 school days then the parent/carer will be informed that the matter will be referred to the County Council and recovery action will be pursued.

Extended school activities

Payment for extended school activities should be made in advance and clearly marked in a sealed envelope with the name of the child, amount and day/s that the care is required.

If in the event that payment has not been made then at the end of the week parents/carers will be contacted requesting payment.

Any non-payment will result in the parent/carer being informed that they can no longer use the facility and the debt will be referred onto the County Council for recovery.

Music tuition

Music lessons are provided by the school at a charge to the parent/carer of a child. Parents/carers are informed of the cost upfront and have a commitment to pay for a full year regardless of whether the child continues with the lessons. They are asked to pay at the beginning of every term. When payment is not received a text will be sent to the parent/carer to remind them, if payment is still not received lessons will stop until payment is made. In the event that no payment is received the debt will be referred onto the County Council for recovery.

Board and lodging on residential visits

The board and lodging element of a residential visit can be charged to parents/carers and they are notified of the cost in advance and are given the opportunity to pay in instalments should they wish.

Payment must be made in full before the departure date or the child will not be allowed to attend.

Remissions

In some cases governors have agreed that certain categories of pupils are not liable for the fee or are eligible for a reduced fee for some or all of; extended school activities, music tuition or residential visits. This is included within the Charging and Remissions Policy (reviewed annually).

Lettings

Contracts for lettings of the school premises will be drawn up as necessary between the school and the client in line with the Charges and Remissions Policy.

Failure to pay on time will result in the debt being referred to the County Council for recovery. The letting agreement will be void and the client will be refused future hires.

Writing off debts

When all practical and cost effective methods of debt recovery have been exhausted by the County Council the school will be notified of the amount of debt that is considered to be irrecoverable.

The governing body will take into account the age and size of each debt and any advice from the County Council before making a decision to write off debt.

Approved by Governors on 1st October 2025

Amended 27th January 2026

Due for review in Autumn 2026