



# Calmore Junior School Debt Recovery Policy

The Governors approved this policy: October 2025

**To be reviewed annually.**

Signed: Miss Cathy Ingram

(Headteacher)

Signed: Mrs R Penny (Chairs of Governors)

## **Debt Recovery Policy**

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 will take all reasonable measures to vigorously collect debts as part of its management of public funds.

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.

The school will ensure Governors are kept up to date with the school debt situation.

### **The School is required to ensure that:**

- All invoices outstanding are accurately recorded and maintained
- 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 30 days."
- Services may be withdrawn where the debt is not settled
- 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
- Debt will continue to be chased when a child leaves school and will transfer any debt to a younger child if a sibling leaves

### **The Governing Body must:**

- Consider the arrangements for debt recovery
- Approve the school undertaking legal action
- Ensure the anonymity of the families involved is preserved at all times

### **Debt Recovery Procedures**

Where payment from the parent / guardian has not been received in advance, or at the post of sale the following process should be applied:

#### **Initial informal overdue payment reminder**

This may be informal when a parent or guardian comes to the school or by telephone or text. The date of the initial reminder should be recorded.

#### **Step 1 - First Overdue Payment Reminder**

A reminder is issued 14 days after payment is due. If action is to proceed further, it is necessary to prove that all reasonable attempts have been made to recover the debt and that these attempts have been made in a timely manner, ie at the time the debt first became overdue. A £10.00 charge may be issued.

The date of the initial reminder should be recorded.

In the case of school meals, if the debt is not settled on the week of the First Overdue Payment Reminder being issued, then school will be unable to provide the child(ren) school dinners. The school will send a text reminding to settle the debt.

### Step 2 - Second Overdue Payment Reminder

A second reminder will be issued 28 days after the First Reminder. This states that the debtor must start to pay off some of the debt within a week of the reminder being issued. The date of the Second Reminder should be recorded.

### Step 3 - Final Notice

An official invoice may be issued for the full amount. This will trigger the Local Authority Debt Recovery processes and may be referred to the legal department. The debtor may be advised that they will be required to pay in advance for all future supplies or the supply will no longer be available to them.

| 7 days after debt | 14 days after debt   | 28 days after debt   | 42 days after debt   |
|-------------------|--|--|--|
| Informal reminder | First Overdue Payment Reminder<br>£10.00 charge may be issued. | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Overdue Payment Reminder<br>Services can be withdrawn. £20.00 charge may be issued | Final notice issued<br>Services will be withdrawn<br>£20.00 charge<br>Debt referred to a third party |

These charges are at the discretion of the head teacher.

The school governors may reduce or cancel a debt in certain circumstances.

### The School will:

- Always adopt a sensitive approach to debt recovery
- Give the debtor appropriate notification and time to pay the outstanding charge
- 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 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 or where it is shown that the debtor is experiencing financial hardship
- A record of any write-off and both the reason and approval will be retained for 7 years.