

CEDARS

Short Stay School

Policy Title	Debt
Written By	TH
Review Committee	Finance & Resource
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Responsible for Day to Day Management	LM

Debt Policy

Introduction

The school's Management Committee 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 Management Committee 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

CEDARS have 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 per Staffordshire County Councils School Debt Recovery Policy.

- Invoice raised with payment terms of 28 days
- A reminder is sent five days after the 28 days has expired
- A final notice is issued after 19 days of the first reminder. Once the debt is 33 days overdue (61 days) the Debt Recovery Officer will contact the parent/carer/customer at their home/ business address (minimum value £25).

Dinner Money

Where a payment is required for school meals it should be paid in advance and clearly marked in a sealed envelope with the child's name and amount and handed in at the school office.

The school office will reconcile each week the payments received to the meals ordered and any discrepancy will in the first instance result in a phone call to the parent/carer to request payment. Any parent/carer that has not made payment by the end of the week will be sent a letter requesting immediate payment. This will be sent with the child and emailed.

If payment is still not received within five 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.

Management Committee have decided on the following policy regarding meals:

- All meals to provided to pupils free of charge

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.

Accounts are reviewed on a weekly basis and statements will be sent out to parents/carers every half term. If in the event that payment has not been made then at the end of the week parents/carers will be sent a letter and email 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.

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 to 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.

Exam fees

If payment is not made by the date specified by the school then the pupil will not be entered for the exam.

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 Management Committee 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.