



St Leonard's C of E (A) Primary School

Debt Recovery Policy

Reviewed by:

Governor: **O. Leedham**

Headteacher: **K.Cullen**

Date for review: February 2028

Introduction

The school's Governing Body has a responsibility to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school to receive all income to which it is entitled. St Leonard's C of E (A) Primary School will therefore take all reasonable measures to collect any monies owing to it as part of the management of public funds. Collecting money from parents or carers is a sensitive area and issues of debt collection should be dealt with sensitively and confidentially at all times.

Aims and Objectives

At St Leonard's C of E (A) Primary School we comply with all Staffordshire requirements for Financial Regulations for Schools with regard for the following aims:

- To make sure there are sound and proper financial procedures in school for dealing with the school's finances
- To ensure that proper controls are in place
- To provide a clear framework for managing school finances
- To protect the school governors, Headteacher and school employees

Procedures

As school uses the My Finance for invoices and payment, the County Council Income Team will carry out standard debt recovery procedures on behalf of the school.

The following procedure will be employed for all outstanding debts of 14 days

1. A gentle reminder (telephone, text or one to one)
2. A formal letter (by pupil mail, e-mail or post)
3. An invoice to be raised on the MyFinance system to enable Income Section to proceed with debt recovery procedures.
4. Invoice to be posted with a covering letter informing the debtor that the debt has been passed to the County Council Income Team.

When all practical and cost effective procedures have been exhausted by the County Council Income Team, the Director of Finance and Resources will notify the school of the amount of the debt that is considered to be irrecoverable and should be written off. Writing off a debt will lead to a charge being made to the school budget as the income was credited to the school budget when the invoice was raised. The Governing Body must:

- Approve the writing off of any debt in relation to the school budget.
- Take into account their review of the age and size of the debt together with the advice from The Director of Finance and Resources.

Dinner Money

Payment for school meals should be made upon checkout when booking meal selection in advance via ParentPay.

Every effort will be made by school to make personal contact to ascertain whether financial difficulties are present and then advise accordingly. Any debt outstanding at the month end will be reported to the Headteacher, the debt will remain on the school budget. The Finance & Support Officer will then initiate further recovery, ultimately by raising an invoice on the My Finance system. The school is responsible for all dinner money income as school meals are charged directly to the budget by Entrust.

Ospreys

Payment for before and after school care should be booked half termly and paid in advance via ParentPay at the beginning of each month, otherwise care can be refused should no payment be made.

Payments are verified on ParentPay and a record kept by the school office. Parents/carers will initially be reminded by text if payment is not received and should no funds be received you will be refused childcare.

Occasional emergency childcare can be booked via ParentPay, payment must be made upon checkout to secure the booking.

Outdoor Education

Some year groups have the option to attend an outdoor education centre annually. Parents 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 unless an extended payment period has been agreed with the Headteacher. All payments are processed through ParentPay directly into the MyFinance system.

Music Tuition

Children in years 3-6 have the opportunity to have peripatetic music tuition via Staffordshire Music Services. Parents or carers sign a commitment form before the child commences tuition which clearly states that even if the child stops playing the instrument they will be liable for the whole year's tuition fees. Payment for music tuition can be paid as an annual amount or termly if preferred, payments are made via ParentPay and are processed through the My Finance system. Non-payment of fees will be chased by text messages followed by a letter and subsequently an invoice will be raised on the My Finance system to allow County to instigate the debt recovery process.

Implementation, Monitoring and Review

Day to day implementation of the procedures is carried out by the office staff and Headteacher. The Finance & Support officer will present a report to the Governors of any outstanding debts and explain the procedures followed to date.

Review of the Policy will take place annually or sooner if necessary.

February 2026

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.