St Gabriel's RC Primary School
Debt Collection and Write Off Policy

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Next Review: January 2027
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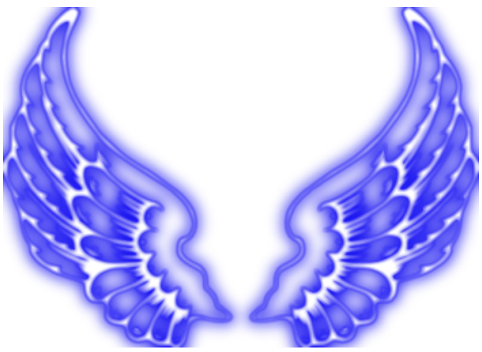
In God's Love: We Welcome
We Learn
We Grow
TOGETHER



Statement of Intent and General Policy

Failure to control debt has an adverse affect on the school's finances and therefore the school endeavours to ensure all reasonable steps are taken to control debts within the school accounts, however in some circumstances debts do occur and this policy takes details the management of debt and write off rules.

Objectives

The following policy objectives set by the Governors can be stated:

- To detail the management of arrears against accounts, specifically school meals, breakfast and after school clubs
- To detail the parameters under which services would be withdrawn
- To detail the process for recovering debts owed to the school
- To detail the parameters under which debt can be written off and the Governor's responsibility in this process

Management of Arrears

The school has accounts which require regular payments such as school meals and breakfast and after school club. As services are provided against these accounts in some circumstances, when parents fail to maintain payments, these accounts can go into arrears.

It is the responsibility of the School Administrator (school meals) and Extended Services Supervisor (breakfast and after school club) to ensure that these accounts are carefully managed and that arrears rules are enforced, including withdrawal of service. In order to manage this the following rules are agreed by the Governing Body:

- All accounts should be kept in order, parent should be issued with a copy of these rules as part of their access to service (back of application forms)
- When account goes into arrears a reminder letter or parentmail should be sent in the first week requesting payment, this should be repeated on a weekly basis whilst the debt is outstanding.
- The Pastoral Manager should be involved in all discussions of service withdrawal and should attempt to meet with the parents to recover the debt, see section below on payment plans
- If payment is still not received then the service should be withdrawn. For school meals the parents will be asked to provide a packed lunch.
- A child will not be allowed back into any service unless all arrears are paid in full and thereafter the account must remain in good order or services may be withdrawn again

Payment Plans

The Pastoral Manager will intervene with any parents where accounts are in arrears and help the family to maintain access to service whilst paying off arrears. The School Administrator and Extended Services Co-ordinator can discuss any issues with arrears with the Pastoral Manager. If the

Pastoral Manager feels the situation would be helped then a payment plan can be drawn up. A payment plans ensures that the parent is able to repay the arrears at a level they can afford, whilst still accessing the services they require

Debt Collection

When all other attempts to recover debt have failed, the school will use Rochdale Council's debt collection service, through the Finance Department. Given the financial cost of recovering debts it is not financially viable to recover combined debts of less than £150 as there is a charge incurred for the recovery, therefore debts from all sources should be accumulated together and recovered at the same time. If a combined debt is less than £150 then the school will continue to send collection letters and enforce withdrawal of service. The debt will remain with the child for the duration of their time at the school. Write-off will only occur when the child leaves the school if failure to recover the money has failed. In order to recover the debt of over £150 a debt collection form must be completed and sent to the Council.

Writing-Off Debt

The Head and/or Resources Sub-Committee are able to authorise of the write off of debt of less than £1000. For values in excess of this written approval is required from the Full Governing Body. A report will be provided to the meeting to detail the debt, recovery history and reason for failure to recover.