

WILLAND SCHOOL

Dinner Money Arrears Policy

School meals must be purchased in advance and payment can be made via online transaction at <https://login.schoolgateway.com>, a cheque payable to Devon County Council or by cash.

When a parent/guardian has failed to pay for the cost of a school meal, Willand School may allow a meal to be provided where it is felt that this is a temporary situation e.g. money lost on the way to school, minor domestic problem etc.

A letter, text or email will be sent to the parent/guardian notifying them that their child's dinner money account is in debt and the outstanding balance. Parents/guardians are asked to respond to the notification by return. Reminders, increasing in severity, will be sent until the debt is cleared.

If the child's account is still in debt and the total family's account is in excess of £15 owing, the school will notify the parent/guardian that they will have to provide their children with a packed lunch each school day until the debt has been cleared. If the child arrives without lunch they will be provided with a packed lunch which will be charged to the parent at the same cost as a cooked meal.

Should the debt not be cleared within 5 school days, the debt will be referred to the Debt Recovery Team at Devon County Council. They will initiate debt recovery for overdue accounts in line with Devon County Council's financial standards and policies.

Parents/guardians may contact the Headteacher where a pupil continues to require meals and no payment has been made to discuss the individual circumstances of the pupil and their parents.

This policy has been compiled recognising the difficulties placed on Headteachers in balancing the social welfare of pupils with the management of Devon County Council's money.

APPENDIX 1

Initial Letter

Dear _____

Re: School Meal Payments for _____ RegGroup _____

Child name _____ has had a school meal but there are insufficient funds in your account. The outstanding balance on _____ (Date) was £ _____ We would appreciate it if you could send the money in tomorrow either with your child or hand it in at Reception.

Meals have to be purchased in advance. To assist you they can be purchased online at <https://login.schoolgateway.com> and it is really easy to use this method to buy the lunches. You can also pay for your child's lunch between 8.50 am and 9.10 am from Reception.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Stronger Request Letter

Dear _____

Re: School Meal Payments for _____ RegGroup_____

You may not be aware that the balance on your school meal account is _____(Balance) and is nearing the limit of £15, as detailed in the School's Dinner Money Arrears Policy, which came into effect from 1st April 2014.

The policy states that if your account exceeds £15 and has not been cleared within 5 school days then the outstanding amount will be referred to the Debt Recovery Team at Devon County Council. They will initiate debt recovery for overdue accounts in line with Devon County Council's financial standards and policies.

All parents were provided with a copy of the policy with Issue 25 of the Willand Word on 24th March 2017. The policy can be found on our website on the Information Section or alternatively we can provide you with another printed copy.

We would like to remind you that all meals must be purchased in advance.

Yours sincerely,

Final Request letter

Dear _____

Re: School Meal Payments for _____ RegGroup_____

The balance on your school meal account is _____(Balance) Your account exceeds £15 and has not been cleared within the last 5 school days. Should this have been an oversight on your part, please clear your account immediately either online or by providing the school with cash or a cheque, payable to Devon County Council.

All parents were provided with a copy of the policy with Issue 25 of the Willand Word on 24th March 2017. The policy can be found on our website on the Information Section or alternatively we can you provide you with another printed copy.

If your account is not cleared by the next school day then, in line with the School's Dinner Money Arrears Policy, the outstanding amount will be referred to the Debt Recovery Team at Devon County Council. They will initiate debt recovery for overdue accounts in line with Devon County Council's financial standards and policies. **Please be aware that this could affect your credit rating in the future.**

Until the outstanding amount has been cleared please do not request any further school meals but provide your child with a packed lunch each day.

We would remind you that all meals must be purchased in advance.

Yours sincerely

POLICY HISTORY

Policy Date	Summary of change	Contact	Version/ Implementation Date	Review Date
29 10 13	Updated DCC policy in line with changes to school systems	LO	6/3/14	March 2017
13.03.17	Change of timescales and inclusion of letters	AHi	16.03.17	Mar 20
14.05.20	Updated in line with recommendation from Governors concerning non-payment	AHi	25.06.20	Mar 23