



SCHOOL MEAL ARREARS PROCEDURE

County council guidance clearly states that 'a school meal can only be given to a child if payment has been received' and parents/carers should recognise that the school must follow procedures in the event of school meal arrears and show that an audit trail is clearly evident.

The school readily welcomes contact from parents/carers who are struggling to pay for school meals, but contact from parents/carers should be made as soon as possible so that the matter can be discussed at an early stage and a plan put in place before the debt becomes unmanageable.

We would therefore ask parents/carers to note the school's meal arrears procedure, as follows:

1. If your school meal account is in arrears after two weeks (ie., £24.40 per child), a reminder letter will be sent out to parents/carers via your child's bookbag on a Friday. Parents/carers should make an immediate payment via their ParentPay account.
2. If payment remains outstanding and the debt has increased by the following Friday and no contact from the parent/carer has been received, a second letter will be posted, or hand delivered, to the parent/carer. Upon receipt of this letter, parents/carers should either:-
 - a) make an immediate payment or
 - b) contact the school office to discuss the situation and determine a resolution.
3. If no contact is made by the parent/carer by the Monday of the following week and the debt remains unpaid, then parents/carers must make alternative arrangements at lunchtime, as a school meal can only be provided if payment is received in advance.
4. Failure to settle the outstanding amount will result in the debt being referred to the Education Office in Harrogate, who will pursue the parent/carer on behalf of the county council.

If you feel that you may qualify for Free School Meals, please log on to www.northyorks.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals for a list of the criteria and an application form.

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