

Debt Recovery Procedures

Where payments have not been received in advance or after an informal reminder by text or letter, staff will follow an approved debt recovery procedure. This may involve a meeting with the headteacher to discuss a repayment plan; a referral to the school's Legal Services Provider; and in worse case scenario an external debt collection agency.

Where school incurs additional costs to remove a debt, governors will decide whether to seek to recover the costs from the parent.

We would like to emphasise that if any parent finds themselves in extreme cases of financial hardship that they contact school as soon as possible. This will enable us to sensitively approach the issue.

The aims of the Debt Management policy

- To ensure a professional, consistent and efficient approach to debt collection.
- To set in place the procedures followed in order to ensure the invoice is paid and, if not, that debt recovery is attempted
- To enable the opportunity for the debtors circumstances and ability to pay to be considered and so distinguish between the debtor who won't pay and the debtor who genuinely can't pay.
- To ensure that debts are managed in accordance with legislative provisions and best practice.
- To treat the individual consistently and fairly regardless of age, sex, gender, disability and sexual orientation and to ensure that the individuals' right under Data Protection and Human Rights legislation are protected.

Further information about the schools policy for charging can be found on the school website in the Charging and Remissions Policy.

Pensans School Parent Guide



Debt Management



Pensans Debt Management Guide

Background and Introduction

Pensans generates income in many ways including from dinner monies, educational visits, school trips, swimming trips, other extra-curricular activities, before or after school clubs, items to buy and lettings from hirers of the school premises.

The effective management of debt is important to the success of any school. Any money owed to school has an impact on the budget and may affect the resources which can be provided to all students. The Headteacher and Governors of Pensans School have a duty to ensure effective use of the school budget to raise standards and maximise the achievement of pupils.

In addition, the school is aware of the negative impact that being in debt can have on families. In line with our school vision and aims, we do however believe that we have a wider social responsibility. We need to ensure that there is a balance between the competing needs to maximise income collection and ensuring that parents/carers with outstanding balances/debts are treated in a fair and equitable manner.

In order to ensure that the required balance is applied in the recovery of debts, the Pensans Governing Body have recently developed a Debt Management policy. The school will take all reasonable measures to be a NO DEBT school. A debt will be written off or passed onto an external debt collection agency only after all reasonable measures have been taken to recover it.

The following section summarises the procedures school takes to prevent debts accumulating:

Preventative measures

It is important that school is as transparent as possible to avoid parents generating debts. As a result school has systems in place to prevent debt building up. These include:

PARC after-school club:

- Parents sign agreements each half term to remind them that PARC payments need to be made in advance via ParentPay.
- Parents owing money for PARC will not be able to use the facility if they have outstanding monies for 4 weeks.

Breakfast Club:

Parents will be sent texts at the beginning of each term to remind them that breakfast club payments need to be made in advance via ParentPay. Parents owing money for Breakfast Club will not be able to use the facility if they have outstanding monies for 4 weeks.

School Meals:

- A reminder in the newsletter each week will state that school dinners should be paid in advance via ParentPay.
- Parents owing money for dinners will get weekly text reminders.
- Parents owing for a full week of dinners (currently £11.50) will be sent a reminder letter. They will also be contacted to bring in a packed lunch if they have owe for a full week of dinners.
 - If parents are not reachable the child's emergency contacts will be asked to bring in a packed lunch. This will occur until the debt is paid or a repayment plan is in place.

Trips/activities/purchases:

- Where possible, items for purchase will not be given unless payment has been made via ParentPay.
- Parents will be advised of trip/activities in advance and via a letter which will request voluntary contributions to cover the cost. We ask that monies are paid before due dates or the date of a trip/activity. If insufficient total funds are received for an activity it may be cancelled.
- Depending on the cost of a trip, we may enable parents to pay via ParentPay over a period of time.
- If insufficient total funds are received for an activity it may be cancelled.

Nursery paid hours:

- Invoices will be issued fortnightly via email and paper copy to ensure all parents know their current balance.
- After two consecutive missed payments staff will have a meeting to discuss payment of the debt. An agreed repayment system will be put into place immediately.
- Failure to pay in accordance with the agreed repayment system will result in you not being able to book any paid sessions until the debt has been cleared in full. A meeting with staff will be required before agreeing to booking paid session in the future.