

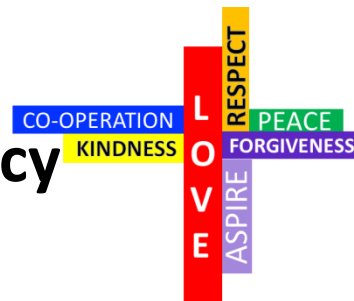


Hormead CE(VA) First & Nursery School

Optional Extras Payment Policy

Written: June 2018

Review Schedule: Triennially



1. Aims

- To outline the school's procedures regarding collection of monies due for optional extras (school meals, nursery fees, after school club fees etc.);
- To work with parents to provide a flexible approach to the lunchtime nutritional needs of our pupils
- To ensure the smooth, efficient and cost effective operation of the school
- To clarify the roles and responsibilities of school staff, parents and pupils
- To present a workable, fair mechanism for the collection of charges made for school services.

2. Policy

2.1 School meals are available to pupils at a daily cost set by our suppliers (Hertfordshire Catering Ltd., published on the school website and updated annually in April) or at no cost to those in receipt of a free meal entitlement. We also offer a 'Golden Ticket' for parents to order a school meal to eat with their child. The Golden Ticket meal is charged at the adult rate, published on our website and in the newsletters.

2.11 Our supplier enables us to offer a flexible service, where pupils can choose their meal option each day at registration. Once a request has been placed in the morning, it is added to the pupil's account.

2.2 Nursery places are offered and operated in accordance with our Nursery Admissions policy (detailed on the school website and available through the school office). Sessions are funded through a mixture of government funding and charges made to parents for additional hours beyond those funded by the Government. The current chargeable hourly rate is published in the Nursery Admissions Policy for the relevant year.

2.21 Parents have responsibility to demonstrate eligibility for any funding to cover the charges incurred. For more information about this process, please see the Nursery Admissions policy or the government Childcare website.

2.3 After School Clubs (and childcare) are available for pupils and parents to use each day during term from 3.15pm to 5pm. They offer enrichment activities extra to those provided as part of the curriculum, and they provide a childcare service for parents unable to collect children at the end of the school day. They are not compulsory and the school charges a per pupil fee in order to cover the running costs of the clubs. These fees are reviewed annually and published on the After School Club booking form for the relevant year, along with details of the clubs offered and sessions available.

2.31 The school provides funding support from within the school budget for the Activity Club portion of this service as part of our Charging and Remissions policy for those pupils whose parents are in receipt of certain benefits. This enables equality of opportunity for our After School extra-curricular provision. Please see that policy for details of qualifying benefits.

3. Paying for school meals.

3.1 The payment for meals is required in advance on a daily (usually for ad hoc meals taken), weekly, monthly or half-termly basis.

- Please send money in to school on a Monday, or the first day of the school week/half term.
- Payments can be made online through SchoolComms Gateway app/website, by cheque (payable to Hertfordshire Catering Ltd – write your child's name on the back of the cheque) or by cash in a sealed envelope with the name of your child, class and the amount enclosed.
- In the case of absence, please send payment on the first day back at school.
- Return of money due to meals paid for but not taken will be credited to your child's account for the following week/term.
- If paying by cheque and your cheque is returned unpaid, you will be charged the relevant banking fee.

3.2 Should a child arrive at school without payment or a packed lunch, the School will telephone home in the first instance to establish if alternative arrangements have been made. If the school is unable to contact anyone using the details provided, school will make a judgement based on the best interests of the child and any charges incurred will be charged to that child's account and payable by the child's parents.

3.3 If a child's entitlement to free school dinners has expired, the parent/carer must provide a packed lunch or send payment for school meals in a sealed envelope.

3.4 If payment has not been made

3.41 If your child has taken a school meal which has not been paid for you will be sent a reminder detailing how much you owe (Appendix 1). Payment must then be made immediately using the methods outlined above. If payment is not received within five school days, a further letter will be sent detailing the consequences of non-payment and a final date by which payment must be made (Appendix 2).

3.42 If the matter remains unresolved after the date detailed, you will be sent a 3rd and final letter requesting payment and detailing the school's next course of action (Appendix 3).

3.43 The school cannot tolerate debt amounting to more than one weeks' payment as if debts are incurred then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents. If a parent repeatedly fails to provide a packed lunch, or sufficient monies to cover the cost of school meals, there may be a referral to Social Services as we consider this to a Safeguarding matter regarding pupil's welfare.

3.44 The school is not obliged to provide a school dinner where payment is not forthcoming or where authorisation for free school meals has not been received, and some schools are known not to provide a meal in these circumstances. We will therefore act promptly to address such issues at an early stage, in order to prevent arrears of dinner monies from accumulating to a point beyond parents means to settle.

3.45 The school will in exceptional circumstances postpone the refusal to provide meals where parents have advised the school of their financial situation and school is satisfied that the funding/payment will be forthcoming.

3.46 In these situations, the school will work closely with parents in working out a form of payment plan to help resolve the situation if requested by the parent. However, where no attempt is made to clear the debt the school will be obliged to follow the procedure outlined in the school's Debt Management Policy.

3.47 Information regarding free school meals is available from the School Office.

4. Paying for Nursery Fees and After School Club (Childcare)

4.1 Parents will be invoiced for any fees due at the start of each term (Autumn, Spring, Summer). The invoice will detail the total for the upcoming term, and half termly installments. Parents can choose to pay for each half term separately or for the full term (Nursery Fees are always invoiced half termly). The invoice (or first installment) is payable within seven days of the date of the invoice. A second invoice for the remaining balance will be sent out after half term. Payments owed will also show through a parent's SchoolComms Gateway account.

4.2 Payment can be made through the online SchoolComms Gateway app/website, cheque (payable to Hornead School) or cash. The school also accepts Childcare Vouchers. Please check with the school office to ensure the school is registered.

4.3 The Terms and Conditions of booking a **Nursery Place** and the charges made are detailed in the Nursery Admissions Policy. This also includes changes to bookings, invoice periods and cancellation terms. Parents should read this carefully before applying for a place.

4.4 The Terms and Conditions of booking for **After School Clubs** are detailed on the Booking Form and highlight additional charges for late collection, remission of fees for those in receipt of certain benefits (Pupil Premium Grant) and cancellation terms. Parents should read these carefully before booking a place for their child.

4.5 If payment has not been made

4.51 We encourage all parents to contact school as soon as possible if they are unable to make a payment or full payment for fees due. For Nursery Fees, an administration charge of £10 may be made for late payment.

4.52 If payment has not been received within seven days of the invoice date, a reminder invoice detailing how much is owed plus any administration charge will be sent out. Payment should then be made immediately. If payment is not received within a further seven days from the date of this invoice, a final reminder invoice and accompanying letter will be sent requesting payment and the school's next course of action.

4.53 The payment of fees for Nursery or After School Club services directly relates to the staffing and resource costs incurred by the school in providing your child's care. Non-payment of fees by parents means that money which should be spent on the children's education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents. If a parent repeatedly fails to provide sufficient monies to cover the cost of the service requested, we will not be able to provide childcare for their child and the place will be cancelled. For Nursery Places this will only apply to the portion of childcare not covered by Government funding.

4.54 The school will in exceptional circumstances postpone the cancellation of the place where parents have advised the school of their financial situation and school is satisfied that the funding/payment will be forthcoming. In these situations, the school will work closely with parents in working out a form of payment plan to help resolve the situation if requested by the parent. However, where no attempt is made to clear the debt the school will be obliged to follow the procedure outlined in the school's Debt Recovery Policy.

4.55 Information regarding free Early Years Education is available from the School Office and on the Government's Childcare website.

5. Review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Finance Committee of the Governing Body.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Charging and Remissions Policy, and the Debt Recovery Policy.

Version: June 2018

Appendices:

Template letters may be edited before sending in order to reflect the particular circumstances of the debt.

Appendix 1: First Reminder Letter (School Meals) Template

Appendix 2: Second Reminder Letter (School Meals) Template

Appendix 3: Final Reminder Letter (School Meals) Template

Appendix 4: First Reminder Letter (Overdue Fees) Template

Appendix 5: Final Reminder Letter (Overdue Fees) Template

Appendix 1



HORMEAD C of E FIRST & NURSERY SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mr Philip Asher



Dear Parent/Carer,

RE: First Reminder Letter – School Meals

Our records show that unfortunately you have not paid school meal money for your child.

Name:

Class:

As at _____ your account is showing a debt of £_____.

Please arrange for this money to be paid immediately, and within seven days of the date of this letter. You can do this online through the SchoolComms Gateway app/website, by cheque (payable to 'Hormead School') or in cash. Please enclose cheques/cash in a named envelope and hand directly to a member of staff in the office.

Once the debt is cleared, please ensure the account is always in credit.

The cost of a school meal is £_____ per day.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Philip Asher
Headteacher

Appendix 2



HORMEAD C of E FIRST & NURSERY SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mr Philip Asher



Dear Parent/Carer,

RE: Second Reminder Letter – School Meals

Our records show that unfortunately you have not paid school meal money for your child.

Name:

Class:

As at _____ your account is showing a debt of £_____.

This amount may have increased from previous reminder letters if you have continued to order meals for your child.

Please arrange for this money to be paid immediately and within seven days of the date of this letter. You can do this online through the SchoolComms Gateway app/website, by cheque (payable to 'Hormead School') or in cash. Please enclose cheques/cash in a named envelope and hand directly to a member of staff in the office.

The cost of a school meal is £_____ per day.

Since non-payment for school meals affects the quality of service we offer to children, we need to ensure that all payments are up-to-date. If the debt is not cleared within seven days of the date of this letter it will not be possible to continue to provide your child with a school meal. You will then need to make your own arrangements for your child's lunch. This is in keeping with our 'Optional Extras Payment Policy'. A copy of that policy can be found on the school website.

The school reserves the right to follow our Debt Recovery Policy if dinners continue to be ordered without the debt being cleared. This may involve seeking and taking legal advice, and we reserve the right to inform Children's Services of our concerns that you are not providing a meal for your child at lunch time. A copy of the policy may be found on our website.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Philip Asher
Headteacher

Appendix 3



HORMEAD C of E FIRST & NURSERY SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mr Philip Asher



Dear Parent/Carer,

RE: Final Reminder Letter – School Meals

Our records show that despite previous reminders, you have not paid school meal money for your child.

Name: _____ Class: _____

As at _____ your account is showing a debt of £_____.

This amount may have increased from previous reminder letters if you have continued to order meals for your child.

In accordance with the 'Optional Extras Payment Policy' which covers School Meals, your child will not be provided with school dinners as of _____ until the debt is settled.

Please ensure you make sufficient provision for your child's lunch, as is your legal responsibility. Once the debt has been cleared, your child is welcome to resume school meals with payment in advance.

Please contact the school to discuss your outstanding debt. Failure to do so will result in the Debt Recovery Policy being followed. A copy of this policy can be found on our website.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Philip Asher
Headteacher

Appendix 4



HORMEAD C of E FIRST & NURSERY SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mr Philip Asher



Dear Parent/Carer,

RE: First Reminder Letter – Overdue Fees

Our records show that unfortunately you have not paid the attached invoice for your child(ren).

Name:

Class:

As at _____ your account is showing a debt of £_____.

Please arrange for this money to be paid immediately, and within seven days of the date of this letter. You can do this online through the SchoolComms Gateway app/website, by cheque (payable to 'Hormead School') or in cash. Please enclose cheques/cash in a named envelope and hand directly to a member of staff in the office.

Since non-payment affects the quality of service we offer to children, we need to ensure that all payments are up-to-date. If the debt is not cleared within seven days of the date of this letter the school may be forced to cancel your child's place (or the non-funded portion of any Nursery provision taken). This is in keeping with our 'Optional Extras Payment Policy'. A copy of that policy can be found on the school website.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Philip Asher
Headteacher

Appendix 5



HORMEAD C of E FIRST & NURSERY SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mr Philip Asher



Dear Parent/Carer,

RE: Final Reminder Letter – Overdue Fees

Our records show that unfortunately you have not paid the attached invoice for your child(ren).

Name:

Class:

As at _____ your account is showing a debt of £_____.

In accordance with the 'Optional Extras Payment Policy' which covers additional services such as Nursery Fees/After School

Club fees, your child's place (or non-funded portion of Nursery Provision) will cease on _____ until the debt is settled.

Please ensure you make provision to collect your child at _____. We reserve the right to follow our Safeguarding Procedures for uncollected children should they not be collected for cancelled sessions.

Please contact the school to discuss your outstanding debt. Failure to do so will result in the Debt Recovery Policy being followed. A copy of this policy can be found on our website.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Philip Asher
Headteacher