



Abel Smith
School Established
1861

Abel Smith School
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Bad Debt Policy

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Not Confidential



Aim

This policy has been written to help adopt a consistent approach to debt. It provides clarity and consistency in managing debt.

Implementation of this policy

- All parents are provided with a copy of the debt policy via the school website.
- Letters will be sent to parents in advance of trips and other expenses that will outline the costs and the date by which payment is due.
- Trips and other expenses must be paid for in advance.
- Should payment not have been made in advance, a week before the school activity takes place, a text will be sent to the parents who have not paid. Thereafter the matter will be dealt with on an individual basis.

School Dinner Money

- School dinner money is paid directly to HCL. Parents who do not pay their school dinner money in full will be referred back to the school to collect the debt.
- The school office will send parents an invoice for their school dinner money within the first two weeks of the start of every half term. Invoice letters for the second half term will include any monies owing for the previous half term. Three weeks before the end of every term a 'Debt Letter' is sent to parents as a reminder to pay outstanding dinner money before the end of the term. Text reminders are sent to parents who persist in not paying. **Any parent who is £20.00 or more in debt on the last day of term is reported to the Head of School Meals Finance.** These parents are invoiced by HCL and are expected to pay them directly. If the invoice is not paid within 120 days, HCL take the money directly from the school's account. In these exceptional circumstances the head teacher and school office will continue to work with the parents to reclaim the outstanding debt. **Should a parent persist in not paying their school dinner money debt then the school will prevent the debt from escalating further by insisting that a packed lunch is provided as an alternative to HCL school meals.**
- Parents, who do not want their child to have a school lunch, must provide a balanced packed lunch.

Abel Smith operates a limited, discretionary system for expenses to ensure a child does not miss out on important developmental opportunities because of their financial situation. Such expenses can only be waived, where the school has agreed to incur the expense on behalf of an eligible child.

The methods of payment adopted by Abel Smith are:

- Online using WisePay – THIS IS OUR PREFERRED METHOD
- Send cash or cheque in a marked envelope.

The policy is reviewed every three years.