

# **SALTFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL**



## **School Meals Non Payment Policy for Parents January 2021**

The Governors of Salford School are committed to a transparent, consistent and fair approach to the operation of the School dinner system. By adopting this Policy, the Governors wish to ensure that parents, carers, children and staff can work together to ensure that the School dinner system works efficiently and effectively and that arrears in payment can be avoided. Where debts are built up over a period of time, it can often be harder for parents to pay them off. In addition, if a debt incurred by parents during the course of the School year is not repaid by the end of the Summer term, then the costs that should have been paid for by that parent will have to be paid for from the School budget instead. This means that money which should have been spent on our children's education is instead used to pay for debts incurred by parents, which has a negative impact on learning for all. Our parents choose to buy this service from the School and can decide to provide a packed lunch, instead. Free School Meals are also available if parents believe that they qualify for this service. Please contact the School Office for more details and an application form, if appropriate.

### **Payment for School meals**

School meals are available to pupils at a cost of £2.60 per day or at no cost to those in receipt of Free School Meals.

Parents must pay in advance for School meals using the School Gateway.

Any credits for meals paid for but not taken remain, on the system and are carried forward to the next week/term/year until year 6 when any credit remaining will be transferred back to the parent or to a younger sibling at the school. Any meals ordered where the child is subsequently sent home due to illness do have to be paid for as the meal has already been ordered. However, if we are notified before 9.30am that your child will not be taking a school meal on that day, we will be able to avoid ordering that meal and no payment will need to be made.

### **Treatment of Arrears**

If your child has taken a school meal which has not been paid for, you will be sent a reminder by text on a Thursday detailing how much you owe. Payment should be made immediately via the School Gateway. If the debt is not cleared immediately a letter will be sent home via the child on a Friday.

If payment is not received within 7 days the School Office will telephone the parents/carers and request the debt is cleared without further delay and that until the debt is cleared the child should come to school with a packed lunch.

If a parent repeatedly fails to provide a packed lunch, or sufficient money to cover the cost of school meals, the **School may need to inform Social Services that the parent is not carrying out the responsibility of care by providing food for their child at lunchtime.**

Should a child arrive at School without a packed lunch or without payment for a School meal, the School will telephone the parent to see whether alternative arrangements have been made. 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. The School retains its discretion to refuse to provide a school meal in circumstances where there has been persistent non-payment. However, we regard this as a last resort. We do not wish our children to be in a situation where their learning or welfare suffers and the School will therefore act promptly to address such issues at an early stage and to work with families in order to prevent arrears of dinner monies from accumulating to a point beyond parents' means to settle

## **APPENDIX 1 : Letter to Parents/Carers – Week 1 response**

Dear Parent/Carer

Our records show that you have not paid dinner money for your child [Xxxxx Xxxxx name]  
Class: XX

As at [xx/xx/xxxx date] your account is showing a debt of **£x.xx**

If you believe that this figure is incorrect please contact the office to describe your understanding. Otherwise, please arrange for this money to be paid immediately via the School Gateway. Once the debt is cleared please ensure the account is always in credit.

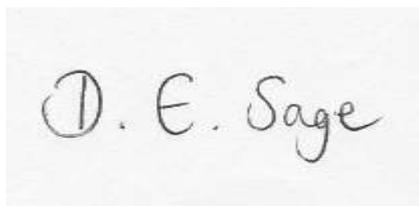
Zest Catering do not operate an arrears policy for school meals.

Using the School Gateway, you can check the account balance anytime by logging in. You can see what meals have been taken and when.

The cost of a school meal is £2.60 per day; £13 per week.

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

Yours sincerely

A photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature reads "D. E. Sage". The first letter 'D' is enclosed in a circle.

Mrs D Sage  
Headteacher

## **APPENDIX 2: Letter to Parents/Carers – Week 2 response**

Dear Parent/Carer

Our records show that you have not paid dinner money for your child [Xxxxx name]  
Class: XX

As at [xx/xx/xxxx date] your account is showing a debt of **£x.xx**

Further to my previous letter to you dated [xx/xx/xxx], I am writing to request that the outstanding balance is paid immediately via the School Gateway.

Using the School Gateway, you can check the account balance anytime by logging in. You can see what meals have been taken and when.

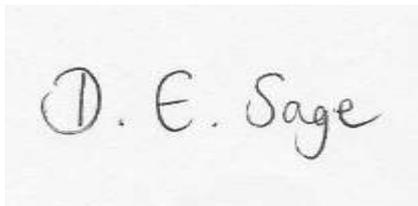
The cost of a school meal is £2.60 per day; £13.00 per week.

When meals are not paid for Zest Catering will recover the money from the school, which takes funding away from teaching activities and therefore impacts all children at the school. We therefore need to ensure that all payments are up-to-date and I am afraid that if the debt is not cleared by the end of this week it will not be possible to provide your child with a school meal. You will need to make your own arrangements for your child's lunch.

The school reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to recover the debt and to inform social services of our concerns that you are not providing a meal for your child at lunch time.

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

Yours sincerely

A photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a white background. The signature reads "D. E. Sage" in a cursive style.

Mrs D Sage  
Headteacher