



## Debt Recovery Policy draft

<b>Approved by</b>	Resources
<b>Previously Approved</b>	New Policy to school
<b>Date</b>	Spring 2019
<b>Review Date</b>	Spring 2021

Acting Headteacher:

Chair of Governors:

## **Statement of intent**

**City of York Council has overall responsibility for debt recovery in schools. In the absence of a policy this interim policy has been written by the school.**

This policy has been written to help Clifton Green Primary School adopt a consistent approach to debt. It provides clarity and consistency in managing debt. It also helps provide parents/carers, staff and customers with a clear understanding of what is expected of them.

Clifton Green Primary School is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, regardless of financial circumstances, and has established policies and procedures to ensure that no child is discriminated against by our offering of school trips, activities and educational extras.

Whilst this is the case, Clifton Green Primary School must have a policy in place to ensure the repayment and recuperation of any outstanding debts incurred by the school on behalf of a pupil. The school will take all reasonable measures to vigorously collect debts as part of its management of public funds. A debt will be written off only after all reasonable measures (commensurate with the size and nature of the debt) have been taken to recover it.

Each case is to be treated individually and the circumstances that have led to the outstanding debt will be taken into account to determine the best course of action and whether it is fair and reasonable to pursue the debt in its entirety if at all. Clifton Green Primary School is committed to adhering to legal requirements regarding charging for school food, activities and materials, and meeting all statutory guidance provided by the DfE.

If a debt is incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education is being used to pay debts. Debt chasing and recovery is also a costly expense for the school and money not spent on children's education. By producing this policy, Clifton Green Primary school hopes to minimise both the debts and the time spent on recovery.

## **Legal framework**

This policy will adhere to the relevant legislation and statutory guidance surrounding school payments and debt recovery, including the following:

- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2018) 'Schemes for financing schools'
- DfE (2017) 'Governance handbook'

## **General Information**

Staff members will be provided with a copy of this policy during induction.

Currently all children in Key Stage 1 are entitled to a Universal Infant Free School Meal (UIFSM). Once the child enters Key Stage 2, meals must be paid for unless the child is entitled to Free School Meals (FSM).

Any parent/carer who is in receipt of certain benefits and thinks their child may be entitled to Free School Meals is encouraged to contact the school to apply. A reminder to encourage FSM applications will be placed in the school newsletter at least once a term.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

Any person(s) involved in the monitoring, recording and pursuing of debts owed to the school must formally record any information gathered and actions taken – data which is to be kept by the school for a period of seven years.

The school's governing body/ Resources Committee:

- Will regularly review details of its debts and what recovery action is needed.
- Must be consulted if legal services are required for debt recovery.
- Will adhere to the privacy rights of pupils and their carers in all cases.
- May decide to leave a case of debt recovery to the decision of Headteacher/School Business Manager (SBM).

The School will ensure:

- Debt reminders are recorded, and those records maintained for a period of seven years – dates and times of letters, phone calls, emails, conversations or any other correspondence.
- Instances of debt are judged on an individual basis, with consideration of the nature of the debt and the circumstances of the family involved.
- The privacy of the pupil and their family will be protected by all staff.
- The level of outstanding debt owed to the school can be determined at short notice.

## **Acceptable credit limits**

In the case of a debt, the governing body / committee should agree upon a 'credit period' within which the debtor can pay the outstanding sum before debt recovery procedures are exercised.

Pupil Meals: - The agreed limit will be a maximum of £50 per child.

Staff Meals: - The agreed limit will be a maximum of £50.

### **Debt recovery procedures**

- **Every Friday the administrator will run a ParentPay report showing current Pupil and Staff debtors.**
- An automatic email reminder will be sent to parents/carers.
- Staff will be reminded of their balance.

### **Pupil Recovery**

Once the debt reaches the limit of £50 a letter (Appendix 1) will be sent to the parent/carer via email and a hard copy will be sent home with the child. The parent/carer will be asked to either pay the debt, send the child in with a packed lunch until the debt is paid and/or arrange to meet with the SBM and the administrator to set up a debt recovery plan.

If the parent/carer does not respond or send the child with a packed lunch, the Headteacher will be advised and a phone call will be made to the parent to ask them to either pay the balance immediately via ParentPay, or provide a packed lunch for that lunchtime.

If this is not resolved satisfactorily, the Headteacher may need to inform City of York Children's Social Care as the parent/carer is not carrying out the responsibility of care by omitting to provide food for their child at lunchtimes.

### **Staff Recovery**

Once the debt reaches the limit of £50 the staff member will be informed and asked to bring in their own lunch until the debt is cleared.

### **Year 6 Pupils/School Leavers**

All debts must be cleared before the pupil leave school.

Year 6 pupils – letters/notification will be sent to parents at the start of the second half of the summer term informing parents that all debts must be cleared before the last week of the summer term. Any meals to be taken in the last week of term must be paid in advance or a packed lunch provided. Outstanding debts will remain as a debt on a sibling's account where applicable.

### **Lettings**

- Invoices will be raised through Financials Web and issued to the customer.

- Monthly aged debtors report to be run off.
- Letter (Appendix 2) will be sent after 30 days of non payment reminding customer of the outstanding amount with a copy of invoice attached and also reminding customer of our terms and conditions.
- After a further 14 days a final demand letter (Appendix 3) will be sent and advising that no further lettings will be available until the debt is paid

Kingsway North  
York, YO30 6JA  
Headteacher: Mr D Brown  
Tel 01904 555105

Website: [cliftongreenprimary.co.uk](http://cliftongreenprimary.co.uk)  
Email: [cliftongreenprimary@york.gov.uk](mailto:cliftongreenprimary@york.gov.uk)

Address

Date:-

Dear

**Pupil School Meals and Debt Recovery Policy**

It has been brought to my attention that your ParentPay account balance is £\_\_\_\_\_. This now exceeds our allowable limit of £50 per child. Please can you arrange to pay the debt immediately through ParentPay. Unfortunately we are unable to offer your child a school dinner until the debt is paid and therefore you will need to send your child with a packed lunch each day until the debt is cleared.

If you are unable to pay this amount immediately please contact me to arrange a meeting, at a mutually convenient time, to discuss a payment plan.

I have enclosed a copy of our Debt Recovery Policy for your attention.

Yours sincerely

Lisa Green  
School Business Manager

Kingsway North  
York, YO30 6JA  
Headteacher: Mr D Brown  
Tel 01904 555105

Website: [cliftongreenprimary.co.uk](http://cliftongreenprimary.co.uk)  
Email: [cliftongreenprimary@york.gov.uk](mailto:cliftongreenprimary@york.gov.uk)

Address

Date:-

Dear

**Your Invoice \_\_\_\_\_ and Debt Recovery Policy**

It has been brought to my attention that your account balance is £\_\_\_\_\_ and is now overdue.

Our payment terms and conditions are 30 days from date of invoice. Please arrange to pay the debt within the next 7 days either by cheque made payable to 'CYC – Clifton Green Primary School' or by credit transfer into our bank.

Account name:- CYC Clifton Green Primary School

Account number:- 25362024

Sort Code:- 050994

I have enclosed a copy of your invoice and a copy of our Debt Recovery Policy for your attention.

Yours sincerely

Lisa Green  
School Business Manager

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Address

Date:-

Dear

**Your Invoice \_\_\_\_\_ and Debt Recovery Policy**

Following my letter of \_\_\_\_\_, it has been brought to my attention that your account balance of £\_\_\_\_\_ is still outstanding.

If we do not receive your payment within the next 14 days, we will be unable to accommodate any further lettings until the account is paid.

Therefore, it may be necessary to inform your clients that from (insert date of next letting) your sessions will no longer be held at Clifton Green Primary School.

Thank you if you have settled your account recently, please contact the administration office with the details.

Yours sincerely

Lisa Green  
School Business Manager