

## **Granby Primary School**

### **Debt management policy**

At Granby Primary School, there is a Charging Policy which outlines the charges which are passed on to parents and carers. These include payments for:

- School dinners (dinner money debt would be considered as £17.50 upwards, this is equal to two weeks dinner)
- Before and after school care
- Summer holiday club
- Extended learning opportunities
- Music and other tuition
- Trips and visits
- Residential education

The principles of the school's approach to debt management are that:

- All payments should be made in advance through our on-line payments system
- All parents will be supported to consider their eligibility to claim Pupil Premium for their child; and encouraged and supported to apply as appropriate
- Parents will be encouraged to talk to the school if they encounter any difficulty in meeting costs - school cannot help if parents do not share that they are encountering difficulties
- The school recognises that if debt is allowed to build up, this creates pressure on the school budget. This means that money which should be spent on all children's education is used to pay for debts incurred by a small number of parents. It is believed that parents find this unacceptable and all parents are asked for support to deliver our no debt policy.

In the implementation of this approach, school records will be continually checked by monitoring the following:

- Does this child qualify for pupil premium?
- Are the dates correct?
- Is it possible that payments have not been recorded correctly?
- Does this parent usually pay on time - is this an exceptional circumstance?
- Has the parent made contact?

If payment is not made by the due date, or the date the service is due to start, the escalation process will be as follows:

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. Due date           | Text reminder will be sent                                  |
| 2. Due date + 1 week  | Phone call will be made                                     |
| 3. Due date + 2 weeks | Letter will be sent advising that service will be withdrawn |
| 4. Due date + 3 weeks | Phone call advising last week of service                    |
| 5. Due date + 4 weeks | Service withdrawn   |

Service will not be resumed until advance payment is made.

Debts will continue to be chased after 4 weeks. If debts remain unpaid, escalation will continue as follows:

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Due date + 6 weeks | Letter will be sent advising that legal action may be considered if the debt is not paid   |
| 2. Due date + 8 weeks | Letter will be sent that the debt has been referred to governors for consideration of legal action if the account is not settled within 14 days. This to be sent recorded delivery |

At the due date + 10 weeks, legal advice will be taken and the matter will be referred to the next Finance Committee meeting. Legal action will not be taken for debts under £50. If, after every effort has been made to recover the debt and legal action is considered impractical or has been unsuccessful, debts may be written off in accordance with the following:

- Debts up to £100 to be approved by the Office Manager and reported to governors
- Debts exceeding £100 and up to £500 to be referred to full governors for approval
- Debts exceeding £500 to be referred to the local authority
- The VAT element of any debt must not be written off as this contravenes HMRC statutory requirements