



SCHOOL POLICY

Debt Recovery Policy



Policy Revision Date	13 th October 2025
Review Frequency	Annual
Role / Author	SBM/Deborah Guy
Governing Body Committee/HT	HT
Date of GB Meeting/HT review for approval	HT 13 th October 2025
Due with Clerk to Governors (where applicable)	Not applicable
Governing Body/HT Approval Date	HT confirmed to FGB 20 th October 2025
Status (draft / approved)	Approved
Date Policy Due for next review:	Autumn 2026

Note:

Please ensure tracked changes are used to highlight changes from the last approved version. The document status should be 'Draft'.

Once the changes have been approved by the Governing Body, the tracked changes can be accepted and the document status changed to 'Approved'.

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Policy Review

The following list must be completed prior to submission to the relevant Governing Body meeting/HT for approval.

Links with other Policies	NA
Model or Locally Produced	Local, reviewed model policy on The Key and Governor Services Model Policy
Are changes to model policy or previous policy clearly identified (e.g. track changes)	Parent letter be sent out to all parents at the beginning of the Academic Year (October 2025)
In the view of the HT is the policy related to High, Medium or Low Risk activity to the school	Low
What are the likely consequences to school of non-compliance	Loss of income from Dinners and Trips
Are the governors/SLT accountabilities clearly identified	Yes
Are other accountabilities clearly identified	Yes
Are there any particular issues/risks associated with implementation/operation of policy	No
How will policy effectiveness be evaluated	Financial reports to Headteacher and Governors
How will HT report to governors on effectiveness and when	SBM Termly debt report to Resources Committee
When will the policy next be due for renewal (for statutory compliance)	Autumn 2026
Does the policy impact on available resources	Yes

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1. Introduction

The Governing Body has a responsibility for ensuring that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school to receive all income to which it is entitled. For this reason, it is important that the school have a policy for dealing with debts, which is approved by the Governing Body.

Parents will be made aware of this policy and the school's procedures by being sent a letter as shown in Appendix 1, and this policy and information will be published on the school website.

2. Principles

1. The School will actively pursue debtors, including parents/carers for the collection of monies owed to it.
2. The Office Team will ensure that:
 - There is documentary evidence of all steps undertaken by the school to recover the debt and this includes recording the dates that letters and statements were sent, and/or phone calls that have been made to debtors in the Debt Register
 - For all outstanding debts, a statement will be issued to the person(s) liable for the debt.
 - Each case involving a family will be judged on the family's individual circumstances and the amount outstanding as to the length of time before legal action is started
 - Staff will exercise strict confidentiality at all times.
3. The Governing Body:
 - Must consider the arrangements for debt recovery
 - Must approve the school undertaking legal action in any particular case
 - Must include in the minutes of its meeting and a record of its decision, its approval to pursue any outstanding debt
 - Will exercise strict confidentiality at all times.
4. Pursuance of Debt:
In the pursuance of debt, the school should:
 - Give the debtor appropriate notification and time to pay the outstanding charge
 - Send the debtor a final notice, including a final statement, by recorded delivery, which states that further action will be taken.
5. Waiving the Debt:
A recommendation to write off or waive a debt can be made by the Headteacher when either:
 - a) All reasonable avenues to recover the debt have been exhausted, and where it is not cost effective to pursue the debt through legal action; or
 - b) It is believed the debtor is experiencing financial hardship
6. Authorisation limits:
 - A debt under £100 may be written off or waived by the Headteacher
 - A debt over £100, but less than £500 may be written off or waived by resolution of the Full Governing Body on the recommendation of the Headteacher.



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APPENDIX 1

LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents/Carers,

School Meals Debt Policy for Parents

As you will already be aware, school budgets are increasingly tight and we are having to count our pennies more closely than ever before to ensure we can still deliver the education your children deserve. To help our financial situation, the Governing Body of Elson Junior School has adopted a **NO DEBT** policy relating to the provision of school meals. When school dinner debts are incurred, monies which should be spent on children's education must be used to clear these debts. I hope you will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents and carers give this policy their full support.

When ordering school meals, please be aware **you must pay in advance for school meals**. Payments can be made either by dropping the money into the school office, or online using the school's payment system (Arbor). Please contact the office if you are struggling with online payments. **Should you not pay in advance, your child will not be given a school meal**, therefore please send your child in with a packed lunch. If a packed lunch has not been provided, we will contact you to ask you what arrangements you have made to provide your child with lunch. Please come in and talk to us if you have a problem with paying for school meals, it may be that you are entitled to free school meals.

If you believe your child may be entitled to free school meals, please consider applying. Not only will you be able to order free school dinners, but the school will receive additional funding for every child registered. The check is quick and easy, and can be done online at <https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/freeschoolmeals/juniorsecondary>. Free school meal entitlement will only apply from the date the application is accepted; it cannot be backdated.

If you incur a debt, and you do not pay the full amount by the 10th working day after a final statement has been sent by recorded delivery to you, the school reserves the right to begin debt management proceedings against you to recover the debt.

We hope by implementing this debt policy we are ensuring that all money available for children's learning is spent on precisely that. If you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs C Paradine
Headteacher