

Little Leigh Primary School



Debt Policy

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As from 1st September 2018, School has adopted a strict NO DEBT policy relating to the school meal service.

School Meal

If debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents. Every parent will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that all parents give this policy their full support.

We cannot feed children for free. Similarly, you cannot take a child to a restaurant and expect that food to be given without paying for it; the same applies at school for school meals. If as a parent or carer, you believe your child/children may have an entitlement to Free School Meals, please apply

online at: <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/education-and-learning/school-meals.aspx>

Payment

Parents/Carers must pay in advance for all school meals online using:

ParentPay **THIS IS OUR PREFERRED METHOD**

Children will not be provided with a school meal unless it is paid for, except those that are entitled to a free school meal or a universal free school meal (KS1). If a parent genuinely forgets to pay in advance, the school may grant a debt allowance of 1 meal only. However, in line with this policy, the debt must be cleared the following day and all future meals paid in advance before another meal is provided.

If the debt is not cleared, the school office staff will call the parent/carers so that they must either:

- Provide a packed lunch immediately
- Pay the cost of the school immediately online at ParentPay

In exceptional circumstances, you may be asked to collect your child/children and take them home for lunch (should the debt continue to remain unpaid). If the parent/carers fails to clear the school meal debt then a meeting will be set up with the Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher. However, should there be a specific confidential reason why you cannot pay, then please make an appointment to discuss this as soon as possible with the Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher.

If the debt continues to exist, a letter will be issued to the parent. The Headteacher reserves the right to begin legal proceedings against the parent to recover the debt. The Headteacher may have to consider involvement of other specialist agencies. They may be informed that the parents are not carrying out the responsibility of care by not providing food for their child at lunchtime.

We hope that by implementing this debt policy we are able to help parents manage school meal money better and at the same time ensure that all money is used appropriately for children's learning.

November 2018