



St Peter's C of E (Aided) Primary School

Little Green Lane, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 8TF

☎: 01252 714115 Fax: 01252 721215

✉: info@stpeters-farnham.surrey.sch.uk

www.stpeters-farnham.surrey.sch.uk



Our Vision Statement

At St Peter's we have high expectations where everyone flourishes, achieves and succeeds within a safe, inclusive Christian community. We promote gospel values of independence, respect and empathy. Through an exciting curriculum, children are inspired to find joy as lifelong learners and active world citizens.

DEBT MANAGEMENT & RECOVERY

Person Responsible:	Business Manager
Governor Committee:	Resources Committee
Review Period:	Every 3 year or in light of any new regulations
Status:	Recommended
Date Adopted:	Autumn 2022
Next review:	Autumn 2025
Ratified by Governors:	23 September 2022

INTRODUCTION

Any money owed to the school has an impact upon the school's finances and may affect the resources the school is able to purchase for the pupils of the school. We hope that parents understand this and make every effort possible to avoid owing money to the school. The school will actively pursue the collection of monies owed to it.

Along with the Finance Department, the Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that procedures are in place for the recovery of any outstanding debt.

This Debt Management Policy sets out the procedures for debt management and recovery, particularly in relation to residential trips, school meals, our Before/After School Club (BASE) and Green Shoots nursery.

No school uniform will be provided until payment is received in full.

SCHOOL MEALS & RESIDENTIAL TRIPS

- All payments for school meals is via our on-line SCOPay system. Accounts must be in credit before meals can be ordered, thus only a tiny minority of parents could be in debt. This would only occur if the school has ordered a meal on behalf of the parents & the parent then doesn't pay the outstanding amount.
- All payments for school residential trips are via SCOPay. Part payments are accepted and parents are able to start paying up to 12 months prior to the trip. Clear payment dates are published to parents. Full payment is required before the start of the trip, unless the parent has a payment plan in place, following discussions with the school.
- The school no longer accepts cheques. Occasionally we accept cash for trips and residential.
- Arrangements can be made to clear any debt by instalments. Parents are always encouraged to speak to staff regarding outstanding debts.
- **School meals - If payments remain outstanding for more than one week** - If payment is not received, a '**first reminder**' email/phone call/letter will be issued at the end of the first week of non-payment requesting payment on the following Monday (see APPENDIX A). Parents are expected to settle the amount owed by a single payment after receiving this letter.
- **School meals - If payments remain outstanding for more than two weeks** - a member of school staff will again attempt to contact the parent to discuss the debt. If payment is not forthcoming a '**notification of withdrawal of school meals**' letter/email (see APPENDIX B) will be issued, requesting payment by the



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following Monday. Further school meals will be suspended until all outstanding debts are cleared. Parents will be expected to provide a packed lunch, and this will be made clear in all communication.

- **School meals - If payments remain outstanding for more than three weeks** - a '*final warning*' letter indicating possible county court action may be taken (see APPENDIX C) will be posted to the parents. Staff will also continue to discuss the issue by phone/email.
- **School meals - If payment is not forthcoming**, staff will refer the details to Surrey County Council legal department for guidance on issuing a County Court summons.
- **If payments remain outstanding for residential trips** – discussions will take place between staff and parents. The child will be refused a place if the outstanding balance is not settled before the first day of the trip, unless a payment plan has been agreed. The Finance Assistant monitors balances and chases parents.

If there are extenuating circumstances as to why the debt cannot be promptly settled, we expect parents to make an appointment to speak to a member of the school's staff. Mrs Dunning (Head Teacher), Mrs Hopkins (Business Manager) or Mrs Major (Admin Assistant) are able to discuss the matter with parents and decide on a repayment plan.

RESIDENTIAL VISITS, DAY TRIPS / VISITS

Please refer to our Charging and Remissions policy for further details.

Clear payment dates are issues to parents for residential trips.

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CLUB (BASE) and GREEN SHOOTS NURSERY

- Parents are invoiced in advance for BASE/Green Shoots sessions. Payment is expected within 14 days.
- Payment is via our on-line SCOPAY system, or via childcare/tax20 vouchers.
- Any outstanding arrears will be pursued initially by the BASE/nursery staff, then by the Finance Assistant, on a weekly basis. Email, phone and/or letter are used, whichever is the most appropriate for the family.
- Arrangements can be made to clear any outstanding debt by instalments. Parents are always encouraged to speak to staff regarding outstanding debts.
- **If payments remain outstanding for more than 14 days** - If payment is not received, a '*first reminder*' email/phone call/letter will be issued at the end of the first week of non-payment requesting payment on the following Monday (see APPENDIX A). Parents are expected to settle the amount owed by a single payment after receiving this letter.
- **If payments remain outstanding for more than 21 days** - a member of school staff will again attempt to contact the parent to discuss the debt. If payment is not forthcoming a '*notification of withdrawal of BASE sessions*' letter/email (see APPENDIX E) will be issued, requesting payment by the following Monday. Further BASE sessions will be withdrawn until all outstanding debts are cleared. Parents will be expected to find alternative childcare, and this will be made clear in all communication.
- **If payments remain outstanding for more than 28 days** - a '*final warning*' letter indicating possible county court action may be taken (see APPENDIX C) will be posted to the parents. Staff will also continue to discuss the issue by phone/email.
- If payment is not forthcoming, staff will refer the details to Surrey County Council legal department for guidance on issuing a County Court summons.



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If there are extenuating circumstances as to why the debt cannot be promptly settled, we expect parents to make an appointment to speak to a member of the school's staff. BASE, Green Shoots and Admin staff are able to discuss the matter with parents and decide on a repayment plan and whether BASE/Green Shoots places will be withdrawn.

APPENDIX A

FIRST REMINDER LETTER for chasing unpaid accounts

Dear Parents

Child/children: _____

Outstanding Amount: £_____ in relation to school meals/residential trip

The above amount is now overdue for payment, and I should be grateful if you would arrange settlement no later than Monday _____ (date) so that the necessity for me to take further, more formal action, may be avoided.

If you have paid this amount within the last three working days, then please accept my thanks and ignore this letter. If you are unable to pay the outstanding amount, please make an urgent appointment to discuss your situation with Mrs Dunning (Head Teacher) or Mrs Hopkins (Business Manager).

Yours faithfully

Finance Office/Business Manager/Head Teacher

APPENDIX B

NOTIFICATIONS OF WITHDRAWAL OF SCHOOL MEALS LETTER

Dear Parents

Child/children: _____

Outstanding Dinner Money: £_____

The above amount is now overdue for payment, and I should be grateful if you would arrange settlement no later than Monday _____ (date) so we may avoid taking more formal action. You have already received previous reminders and we have no option but to suspend the provision of school meals for your child/children.

PLEASE PROVIDE A PACKED LUNCH until the outstanding debt is cleared.

If you have paid this amount within the last three working days, then please accept my thanks and ignore this letter. If you are unable to pay the outstanding amount, please make an urgent appointment to discuss your situation with Mrs Dunning (Head Teacher) or Mrs Hopkins (Business Manager).



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Yours faithfully

Finance Office/Business Manager/Head Teacher

APPENDIX C

FINAL WARNING LETTER (prior to County Court proceedings)

Dear Parents

Child/children: _____

Letter Before action – County Court Proceedings

I regret to note that despite emails, phone calls and text messages, we have received neither settlement for the outstanding school dinner payment, nor any valid reason as to why payment is being withheld.

Outstanding Amount: £_____ in relation to school meals/residential trip

In these circumstances I must advise you that if settlement is not received by _____ (date) then you will leave us no alternative other than to pass the papers to Surrey County Council with an instruction for you to be issued with a County Court Summons in order to secure recovery of the overdue sum.

When taking such action Surrey County Council will claim not only the amount of the debt, but also Court costs, and, in some instances, statutory interest. You will therefore potentially lay yourself open to payment of these additional expenses should you choose to disregard the contents of this letter.

We trust however that in the event such action will not become necessary and that we may now expect your payment in full settlement to the school office.

Yours faithfully

Finance Office/Business Manager/Head Teacher

APPENDIX D

NOTIFICATIONS OF WITHDRAWAL OF BASE or GREEN SHOOTS PROVISION

Dear Parents

Child/children: _____

Outstanding Payment: £_____



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The above amount is now overdue for payment, and I should be grateful if you would arrange settlement no later than Monday _____ (date) so we may avoid taking more formal action. You have already received previous reminders and we have no option but to withdraw the provision of before/after school care (BASE)/at Green Shoots nursery for your child/children.

PLEASE ARRANGE ALTERNATIVE CHILDCARE until the outstanding debt is cleared.

If you have paid this amount within the last three working days, then please accept my thanks and ignore this letter. If you are unable to pay the outstanding amount, please make an urgent appointment to discuss your situation with Mrs Dunning (Head Teacher) or Mrs Hopkins (Business Manager).

Yours faithfully

Business Manager/Head Teacher
