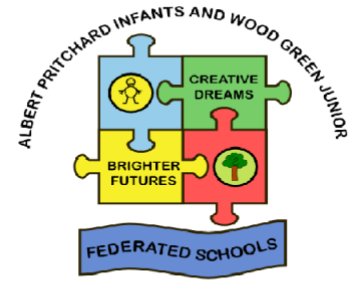


**Albert Pritchard Infant  
and Wood Green Junior  
Federated Schools**  
Executive Head Teacher—Mrs C. Clarke



# School Meals Debt Policy

# Albert Pritchard Infant and Wood Green Junior Federated Schools

Executive Head Teacher—Mrs C. Clarke



## School Meals Debt Policy

This policy has been written to help our school adopt a consistent approach to debt incurred by parents whose children take school dinners. The policy provides clarity and consistency in managing the debt and will also help parents clearly understand what is expected of them.

All pupils in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are entitled to receive Universal Free School Meals.

**Therefore, this policy only relates to pupils in Key Stage 2 (Years 3, 4, 5, and 6) whose parents pay for school meals.**

We wish to avoid a situation which allows parents to accrue large amounts of debt for school meals which they can find difficult to clear. School is no different than any other business and meals taken must be paid for in advance.

It is very time consuming for the office staff to continually chase parents for payment – by letter, phone call or in person. It is also highly embarrassing for all concerned and occasionally it can have a negative effect on our relationships with families.

The governors at Wood Green Junior School feel that a system that works best is a 'zero tolerance' approach. We understand that it may seem a very hard stance. However, it will become easy to maintain once parents realise school can only offer free meals to children whose parents qualify for FSM entitlement. Every other meal must be paid for. Our SchoolComms dinner money system highlights debt immediately, so keeping track will be easy.

The school will make parents aware of the policy in the following ways:

- Email to parents
- Parent Page
- Reminders in the newsletter

This will ensure that all parents get the same message in a consistent way. This will be done at least once a year.

All parents will be provided with a copy of the policy when their child joins the school.

# Albert Pritchard Infant and Wood Green Junior Federated Schools

**Executive Head Teacher—Mrs C. Clarke**



## Key Information

1. All parents are provided with a copy of the debt policy when their child joins the school
2. All school lunches must be paid in advance
3. No child should be sent to school with no money in their account and expect to be given a school meal
4. Where a debt has accrued, **after 2 days** parents will be asked to provide lunches from home until the debt has been cleared.

### School Meal Debt – Action Timeline

Timeline	Action to be taken by school
Day 1 – Meal taken by child	Email reminder sent to parents to remind them of policy. Request to clear and apply a credit amount.
Day 2 – Debt remains unpaid	A member of the Administration Team will phone the parent to ask them to pay the money owed online or bring a packed lunch to school before lunchtime.
Day 3 – Debt remains unpaid	First debt letter sent to parent by email. <b>Packed lunch must be provided by parent.</b> (Appendix A – Example ‘first debt letter’)
Debt remains outstanding for more than 7 days	Final debt letter sent to parent by email/post. <b>Packed lunch must be provided by parent</b> Appendix B – Example ‘final debt letter’)

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**Appendix A: Example 'First Debt Letter'**

<PrintedOnDateLong>

<Addressee>

<AddressBlock>

Dear <Salutation>

**Re: School Meal Payments for <Name>, <RegGroup>**

This is a reminder that, according to our records, you have arrears on your child's dinner money account.

Our records show that the outstanding balance on <PrintedOnDateShort> was <CurrentBalance>.

In order for your child to continue to receive school dinners, it is important to keep your account in **credit** at all times.

**Please arrange for the amount stated above to be paid within 3 days.**

In the meantime, you will need to provide your child with a packed lunch until your account has been settled.

You can pay using SchoolComms, our secure online payment system. If you have forgotten your login, please visit the website to re-set: [www.login.schoolgateway.com](http://www.login.schoolgateway.com) click forgotten your pin. Use your email that you have registered with the school and click reset pin, this will send a text with your new pin number to your mobile phone.

You can check your account balance at any time by logging into your SchoolComms account.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs C Clarke  
Executive Headteacher

**Albert Pritchard Infant  
and Wood Green Junior  
Federated Schools**  
**Executive Head Teacher—Mrs C. Clarke**



**Appendix B: Example 'Final Debt Letter'**

<PrintedOnDateLong>

<Addressee>

<AddressBlock>

Dear <Salutation>

**Re: School Meal Payments for <Name>, <RegGroup>**

This is a reminder that, according to our records, you have arrears on your child's dinner money account.

Our records show that the outstanding balance on <PrintedOnDateShort> was <CurrentBalance>.

**Your debt has already been outstanding for more than 7 days. We would therefore ask you to make immediate payment. If you are unable to do so please provide your child with packed lunches until your account is settled.**

If this continues to be unpaid, the school office will contact you to discuss any queries and arrange a payment schedule.

You can pay using SchoolComms, our secure online payment system. If you have forgotten your login, please visit the website to re-set: [www.login.schoolgateway.com](http://www.login.schoolgateway.com) click forgotten your pin. Use your email that you have registered with the school and click reset pin, this will send a text with your new pin number to your mobile phone.

**Please note that payment for school meals should be made in advance (£2.35 per day, or £11.75 for the week ahead), and that it is important to keep your account in credit at all times.**

You can check your account balance at any time by logging into your SchoolComms account.

If you think your child may be entitled to receive Free School Meals, please contact the school office. Please note that Education Benefits will not back date any entitlement.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs C Clarke  
Executive Headteacher

Postal addresses:

Albert Pritchard Infant School, Crew Road, Wednesbury, WS10 9QG - Telephone 0121 556 0858  
Wood Green Junior School, Hobs Road, Wednesbury, WS10 9BW - Telephone 0121 556 0377