



## ST WOOLOS PRIMARY SCHOOL

### SCHOOL MEALS ARREARS POLICY

#### **Introduction**

Newport City Council holds a statutory requirement to provide school meals to all pupils, although has a duty to charge in instances where a pupil is not entitled to free school meals. For pupils who are not entitled to free school meals, there is an expectation that payment for all meals is made in advance to the school meals contractor.

Undoubtedly, there will be instances where pupils, for whom payment is required, arrive at school without their lunch money. Under this policy, the Governing Body therefore grants the Headteacher with the discretionary ability to provide a meal in certain exceptional circumstances to a pupil who is not eligible free school meals and for whom payment in advance has not been made.

The intention of this policy is to allow flexibility in genuine cases, such as where a parent has forgotten to pay for a meal through the agreed cashless payment system, or where an application for free school meals has been submitted to the Council but not yet processed.

#### **Credit Meals and Remuneration Periods**

This policy sets the debt tolerance at one credit meal per pupil, after which the Headteacher should refuse to provide further meals without a further discussion with the Chair of Governors.

It is expected that retrospective remuneration for these credit meals will be made within ten school days. The Headteacher is responsible for making all appropriate steps to recover the outstanding amount due. This may include, but is not limited to, direct contact with the parent / carer by telephone, email, letter and the online cashless payment system.

The school will offer a graduated payment option to parents should they need it and, where a large debt has accumulated, a longer payment plan will be considered if appropriate. This should be confirmed in writing to the parent / carer, with regular updates of the amount still outstanding.

#### **Reporting**

The Finance sub-committee should regularly monitor the school meal debt position, and provide a termly update to the full Governing Body.

#### **Provision for Unpaid Debt**

Requests to write-off unpaid debt should be submitted to the full Governing Body no more frequently than termly, supported by a breakdown of the action taken by the Headteacher in an attempt to recover the amount due.

Where the Governing Body agrees to write-off outstanding school meal debt, these costs must be borne via the school budget. Use of the School Private Fund is not permissible in such circumstances.

Date Agreed: 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Review Date: 9<sup>th</sup> January 2022