

Philosophy

St Mary's Governing Body has a responsibility to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school to receive all income to which it is entitled. St Mary's CE(A) First School will therefore take all reasonable measures to collect any monies owing to it as part of the management of public funds. Collecting money from parents or carers is a sensitive area; we always deal with issues of debt collection with sensitivity and confidentiality.

Our vision of the Good Samaritan creates thoughts and actions in our school which foster love, kindness, respect and forgiveness"

Aims

At St Mary's, we comply with all Staffordshire requirements for Financial Regulations with regard for the following aims:

- To make sure there are sound and proper financial procedures in the school for dealing with the school's finances;
- To ensure that proper controls are in place;
- To provide a clear framework for managing the school's finances;
- To protect the school governors, head teacher and school employees.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body of the School are responsible for determining the content of the policy and the head teacher for implementation. Any determinations with respect to individual parents will be considered jointly by the head teacher (and/or Governing Body).

Procedure

The School uses the My Finance System for Lettings. Parent Pay is used for services provided in school. The school office uses the following procedure for Parent Pay:

- Send text message to parent asking them to pay debt, as soon as possible.
- A week later, send another text message to the same effect.
- Two days later Letter 1 will be issued - explaining the debt and asking to pay as soon as possible.
- A week later, if no payment has been received, Letter 2 will be issued - stating that the debt has still not been paid, and if not cleared in the next 7 days, we will be suspending the use of services. Letter 2 will state that when the debt is cleared, credit must be added to Parentpay to enable services to resume.
- If the debt is still not paid - Letter 3 will be issued, which will offer a meeting to discuss a payment plan.
- At the meeting, all parties will agree the amount to be paid each week and a date for completion of payment.
- If payments are not made by the agreed date - Letter 4 will be issued - advising the parent that the debt will now be referred to, and managed by Staffordshire County Council.

Dinner Money:

Payment for school meals should be paid on Parent Pay, and parents or carers are notified well in advance of the cost. As St Mary's is now predominantly cashless, parents are required to pay for meals through Parent Pay. Parents/carers will be reminded either in person or in writing (by telephone, text or email) if payment is not received and are advised that their child will no longer be able to have a meal and that parents should send their child with a packed lunch. Every effort will be made by the school to make personal contact to ascertain whether financial difficulties are present and then advise accordingly.

Lettings:

Contracts for lettings of the school premises will be drawn up as necessary between the school and the applicant. Charges will reflect the school's costs for energy, water, lighting and opening up and closing of the school by the janitor. Please see the school's Charging & Remissions Policy.

Implementation, Monitoring and Review:

Day to day implementation of the procedures is carried out by the School Office Manager and Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will present outstanding debt concerns to the Governors and explain the procedures followed to date, at the Finance Committee meeting.

Review of the Policy will take place annually or sooner if necessary.

Agreed and Reviewed by Governing Body March 2024

Reviewed: April 2025

Date of next review: April 2026