



Debt policy

The Hive Federation has adopted a new no debt policy relating to school lunches and school trips.

Non-payment of debt affects the quality of service we are able to offer to the children. Money which should be spent on the children's education is being 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.

Parents can pay for the schools provisions using either of the methods of payment outlined below:

- Online using School Money (if you do not know your School Money login details please contact the School Office)
- Pay cash at the School Office

School Lunches

Children will not be provided with a school lunch unless it is paid for in advance, except those that are entitled to free school meals. If a parent genuinely forgets to pay in advance, the school may grant a debt allowance of 1 meal. However this debt must be paid next day and future meals must be paid in advanced before any meal is provided.

If the debt is not cleared, parents must either provide a packed. In a case when a debt payment is not received nor a packed lunch provided, the school will phone the parent to ask them to come to school with the money or ask them to pay online immediately. Otherwise they must provide sandwiches before lunch.

If payment of the debt is not received by the next day, the Head teacher reserves the right to begin legal proceedings against parents to recover the debt.

If parents believe that their children may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals please contact Norfolk County Councils Free School Meal Team on 01603 222518 or email admissions@norfolk.gov.uk for further advice and guidance. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that you use it if you qualify. Help is available with your application either at the school office or by contacting any of the above number.

School Trips

From September 2019 Residential trips will need to be paid in full prior to the trip. If your household has a low income (for example, you may receive benefits), you may be eligible for a grant which could cover most of the cost of the trip from Anguish's Educational Foundation. To enquire about the possibility, do ring them on 01603 621023 or email info@norwichcharitabletrust.org.uk.

The current 'gross household income' for being able to apply to the Foundation is £700 per week or £36,400 per annum. The area for benefit is for families living within the City of Norwich and the parishes of Costessey, Hellesdon, Catton, Sprowston, Thorpe St Andrew and Corpusty.

If you have any queries, or if you wish to discuss making payments, please contact the School Office.

Yours sincerely

Bad Debt Policy

1. Wherever possible, income due will be collected before or at the time the relevant sale or service is provided. Where this is not possible, an invoice will be raised for immediate payment.
2. All debts will be recorded, and non-payment will be followed up by issuing reminders as outlined below. Where a service is being provided, this will cease immediately, and the debtor will be informed of this in writing. The service will not be reinstated until the debt is cleared and payment of future services is made in advance.
 - 3 weeks from date of invoice - 1st reminder
 - 6 weeks from date of invoice - 2nd reminder
 - 9 weeks from date of invoice - final reminder

The final reminder will be sent by recorded delivery and threatens legal action if the account is not settled within 14 days.

3. After 14 days, where a debt is still outstanding, legal action will be considered and the debtor will be informed of this in writing. The debt may be referred to the County Legal Services, where appropriate.
4. Legal action will not be taken for debts under £50.
5. If, after every effort has been made to collect the debt and legal action is considered impractical or has been unsuccessful, individual bad (irrecoverable) debts may be written off in accordance with the following procedures:
 - those up to the value of £100 to be approved by the headteacher and reported to the next meeting of the governing board
 - those exceeding £100 and up to the value of £500 to be referred to the governing board for approval, either directly or after consideration by the finance committee
 - those exceeding £500 to be referred to the Finance Business Partner (Children's Services) (as per Norfolk's Scheme for Financing Schools)
6. The VAT element of any debt must not be written off as this contravenes HM Customs and Excise statutory requirements.