BRAMLEY PARK ACADEMY

SCHOOL MEALS DEBT POLICY

Bramley Park Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all children and expects our staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Policy reviewed by: Governing Body

Date: November 2018   Review Date: September 2019

This policy has been written to provide clear guidance to parents/carers of what is expected of them in regards to payment of school meals and what action will be taken if parents/carers fail to pay for meals provided to children in their charge. It also provides information of benefits and local schemes that provide information and help with debts.

Provision of school meals.

Pupils attending Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are eligible to Universal free school meals and therefore do not have to pay for school meals until they reach Year Three. Free school meals may also be provided to families who are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits or support:

Income support

Income based Job Seekers Allowance

Income related Job Seekers Allowance

The Guarantee element of state pension (Guarantee Credit)

Support under part V1 of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Child Tax Credit (if you have an income which does not exceed **£16,190**, as assessed by HM revenues and customs)

Free school meals are a statutory right and it is important that all parents/carers who qualify take up their child's entitlement so that they can receive a school meal each day. To find out if you qualify visit the Leeds City Council website to request an application form.

http://www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/pages/freeschoolmeals.aspx

Cost of school meals.

School meals are provided by an outside catering agency at a cost to the school.

Leeds Civic Enterprise/Catering Leeds currently provide the school with this service.

Pupils are charged **£2.10** per meal, this is at a lower rate to what the school is charged by the catering agency. Part of the school budget is set aside each year to subsidise the cost of the meal but, unfortunately, schools cannot afford ,nor do they get funding, to pay for every child to have a school meal. Therefore it is important to understand that if your child is not eligible for a free school meal you **must** provide payment for any meal taken.

How to pay

Payment can be made via ParentPay, which is a system which allows parents to pay for their children's meals via the internet. If you would like to set up an account for ParentPay please see the office staff for information.

If you wish to make cash payments please see the office staff. If you are sending payment in with your child please place the money in a sealed envelope with your child's name, class and the amount enclosed on the envelope.

Problems with payments.

At school we understand that there are times when you may find it hard to pay for your child's meals. In these circumstances, you can speak to staff in school for advice and support. Every situation will be treated with sensitivity and in complete confidence. The members of staff you can speak to are:

Lynn Dove – Learning Manager

Kirsty Thorpe – Pastoral and Attendance Officer

Leanne Brown – Finance Assistant

Rachel Walker – School Business Manager

Non-payment

In instances of non-payment there will be weekly text messages sent to the parent/carer reminding them to make the relevant payments. If the outstanding debt reaches the amount of £50 there will be three further stages followed

1. A letter will be sent home requesting payment.
2. A phone call will be made to home requesting payment.
3. A referral to the school pastoral team.

During this time, school will only be able to provide your child with a sandwich and a drink of water until all monies are retrieved.

Non-payment of school meals is taken very seriously and, in extreme circumstances, outstanding debts may be passed on to Leeds City Council's legal team. At this point school will no longer be able to provide your child with a meal. You may also be taken to court which could lead to a County Court Judgement.

Help available.

If you are experiencing financial difficulties please don't hesitate to contact the schools Safeguarding team, Bramley Cluster, Bramley Hub or one of the following debt advice services;

Money buddies – www.leedsmoneybuddies.weebly.com

 01132350276

Step change – www.stepchange.org/