

ST. PIUS X CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



DINNER MONEY POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

**Together in God's loving family,
we believe, we learn, we grow.**

Last revision completed during:	July 2024
This revision completed during:	December 2025
Date of next revision:	July 2026

Introduction

The responsibility of ensuring school meal payments are made by parents lies with the School. We are financially unable to sustain any debts outstanding, therefore, a policy is required to ensure school meals are paid for in advance and any debts are kept to a minimum. In writing this policy, the Governors of St Pius X Catholic Primary School wish to implement one that ensures meals are paid for, whilst aiding Parents/Carers during financial difficulties and ensuring children still receive a meal at lunchtime.

Procedures

To ensure your child gets their first-choice meal, orders must be placed in advance, online using Arbor. School meals must be paid for at the time of ordering, orders cannot be placed unless there are sufficient funds in the dinner account. If you are un-able to pre-order a meal, your child may order a lunch during morning registration. In this circumstance you must ensure your child's dinner account has sufficient funds to cover the cost of the meal as your child's dinner account will be debited at the point of ordering. If your child orders incorrectly in class, and the meal is cooked, we are not able to offer a refund. Further details of how to use this facility are available from the school office.

Our current charge for a school meal is £2.50 a day. All pre-ordered dinners will be charged for unless your child is absent or you have given the school advanced notification that a hot meal no longer needs to be provided.

When a child is leaving it is imperative for the school office to check the balance of the child's account and refund any credit balance and collect any debt outstanding.

In collecting any outstanding debts, a step-by-step process will be followed. The next step will be implemented if the debt has not been repaid or if no contact has been made with the School to organize a payment plan.

WEEK 1: Debts will be reviewed daily.

- a) Where the debt is **-£0.01** or greater the school office will issue an automated reminder to top up the child's dinner account.
- b) Where the debt is **-£5.00** or greater, the school office will telephone the parent to discuss repayment.
- c) Where the debt is **-£12.50** or greater "debt letter one" will be sent via email or home via the child(ren). This letter requests that the child is provided with a packed lunch until the debt is cleared. The School Office will ensure this is adhered to – if the child(ren) arrives at School without a packed lunch the parent/carer will be telephoned asking them to bring this into School immediately.

WEEK 2: For those debts which received "letter one" the previous week that have not been cleared and where a payment plan has not been agreed, "debt letter two" will be sent via Royal Mail requesting that the parent/carer makes an appointment with the Head to discuss the outstanding debt. If this meeting is not kept or a satisfactory situation agreed, the debt will be referred to the Governing Body and "debt letter three" will be sent via Royal Mail recorded delivery

WEEK 3: For those debts which received “letter three” the previous week the School Governors will need to make a decision on how to deal with this debt and may consider a claim in the Small Claims Court.

We acknowledge that on occasion families have financial difficulties. We encourage those that find themselves in financial difficulty to contact the school where, in these proven circumstances, the school will work discreetly with the family to agree a solution which is not to the detriment of the child.

In the event of a child(ren) leaving St Pius X Catholic Primary School with an outstanding debt, the Governing Body will need to consider whether to write off this debt or pursue payment by other means including making a claim in the Small Claims Court.

If you think your child(ren) may be entitled to receive a free school meal please contact the school office for an application form. Applications are quick and easy and carried out confidentially.

Letter One

Date :

Dear Parent/Carer

School Meals

I am writing to advise you that there is an outstanding balance of on dinner money account. It is the policy of St Pius X that the school does not pay for dinners on behalf of the children. As a result of this, I need to advise you that the school will be unable to provide a dinner for until this debt is cleared. A weekly payment plan to pay the debt would be acceptable, i.e. £5.00 per week, and I would appreciate your co-operation in setting this plan up.

Please ensure..... is provided with a packed lunch until this debt is cleared and school dinners can re-commence.

Thank you for your assistance. If you wish to discuss this further, then please do not hesitate to contact me. A copy of the school's Dinner Money Debt Policy and procedures is available on the school's website for your information.

Yours sincerely,

Sharon Derbyshire
Head Teacher

Letter Two

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

Outstanding Dinner Money

You will recall that we wrote to you on regarding the outstanding balance on dinner money account to the value of £..... As you know, it is the policy of St Pius X that the school does not pay for dinners on behalf of the children. I am disappointed that you have not been able to start a weekly payment plan as suggested in my previous letter, and would request that you telephone the office to make an appointment to see me to discuss this further.

Thank you for your assistance. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

Sharon Derbyshire
Head Teacher

Letter Three

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

Outstanding Dinner Money

Further to my letter ofI am disappointed you have been unable to contact me to make arrangements to recover the outstanding debt of In line with the school's Dinner Money Debt Policy and procedures, a copy of which was sent to you with a previous letter, I have no option but to refer this outstanding debt to the school Governors.

The School Governors will consider the situation and will contact you in due course over the action they will take, which could include making a claim in the small claims court.

Yours sincerely

Sharon Derbyshire
Head Teacher