

Little Eaton Primary School

Extended Services Debt Policy

Reviewed February 2024

Background

The Little Eaton Primary School Extended Services Policy has been adopted to ensure that a consistent and fair approach to debt incurred by parents/carers whose children attend Extended Services provision. The Local Authority is not accountable for the administration of Extended Services, therefore the responsibility falls on the school to pursue instances of non-payment. As a result the school budget will have to directly fund any outstanding debts that cannot be recovered thereby directly affecting the amount of money that is available to provide education to all pupils.

Provision of Extended Services

The Extended Services provision is no different to any other business in that it has to be paid for by someone. This provision is available to children, but at a cost to the parent / carer.

Cost of Extended Services

This provision is available to children at a cost of £4.50 per day for Breakfast Club and £6.00 for a half session and £10.00 for a full session (Tues & Weds Only) for the After School Club. Any revision to the Extended Services prices will be notified to parents/carers at least one month prior to the new charge taking effect.

Payment for Extended Services

Payment should be made in advance for both the After School Club and Breakfast Club via Parentpay. If a parent uses authorised Childcare Vouchers these should be generated at the start of each month for both ASC & BC and the income will be entered manually into Parentpay by the office.

Management of Extended Services

To ensure that the School's budget is not adversely affected by the cost of providing Extended Services, the Governors consider the fairest system to all families is to pursue a 'Zero Tolerance' approach. Although, this may seem harsh to some parents it is important that the Extended Services provision does not run at a loss, otherwise the school budget will be affected, and to the detriment of all our pupils.

If a child has Extended Services provision which has not been paid for, a text detailing how much is owed will be sent to the parent/carer requesting payment directly to the school within 7 days. Prompt action will be taken to address any debt issue at an early stage in order to prevent arrears amassing.

Where a child continues to require this provision, the School must establish if the parent/carer is experiencing hardship which affects their ability to pay. Under these circumstances the parent/carer should be invited to speak confidentially to the Head Teacher.

When the debt exceeds £32 for a *child or family* a formal letter must be sent to the parent/carer informing them of their required actions.

If the debt exceeds £50 for a family and/or action proves unsuccessful in securing Extended Services money arrears, the School will write to the parent/carer, explaining that the School is not obliged to provide Extended Services provision where payment is not forthcoming.

Monitoring and Recovery of Extended Services Debts

At each meeting of the Governing Body/Finance Committee, the Head Teacher will provide Governors with details of any outstanding Extended Services debt and the current / profiled position with regard to the overall profit or loss of the provision. If the provision is running at a loss, the Governors then will have to decide on the existence of the provision in school. The aim of this policy is to minimise the opportunity for debt balances to build up and incurring costly referral to the School's solicitors. The School does, however, reserve the right to begin legal proceedings to recover outstanding Extended Services debts and inform the Local Authority, Legal Services.

Where full or part payment for Extended Services is to be made via voucher scheme, regular reconciliations should be performed to ensure all monies due is received from the voucher company to avoid the commencement of action with the parent should there be a delay in payment from the company.

All Write-offs of outstanding debt must be approved by the Governing Body/Finance Committee following submission of details of the debt by the Head Teacher together with reasons for no further action being taken.

Example – Letter 1

Parent or carer of (Pupil Name)
(Address Line 1)
(Address Line 2)
(Address Line 3)
(Post Code)

Date: XX/XX/XX

Dear xxx

Extended Services provided to (Pupil Name)

According to the School's financial records you have not paid Extended Services money for your child (pupil name). As at xx/xx/xx your account is showing a debt of £xx.

In order that there is no detriment to the school's budget, please clear your child's debt by making arrangements for the outstanding Extended Services debt to be paid immediately. Once you have cleared the current debt I should be grateful if you could ensure that you keep your account in credit. The current cost of this provision is xx per hour / week.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears or wish to discuss the matter further please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Example – Letter 2

Parent or carer of (Pupil Name)
(Address Line 1)
(Address Line 2)
(Address Line 3)
(Post Code)

Date: XX/XX/XX

Dear xxx

Extended Services provided to (Pupil Name)

I am writing regarding the current level of outstanding Extended Services debt that is showing on your account. Despite previous correspondences and messages the debt for your child xx is still outstanding. The School's records show that as at xx/xx/xx your account is £x in debt. The current cost of Extended Services provision is £x per hour, £x per day or £x per week.

I would ask that you please make arrangements to clear this debt immediately and take steps to ensure your account is kept in credit in the future.

As the School's budget will have to fund any overall debt incurred through Extended Services provision, it is essential that all payments are up to date so that the quality of the service provided to all pupils is maintained. Unfortunately, if the debt is not cleared by xxxxx the Extended Services provision will no longer be provided to your child. The School reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to recover the outstanding debt and to inform the Local Authority.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately so that this matter can be resolved.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher