

# **St Helen's Church of England Primary School**



## **Charges and Remissions Policy**

**Our curriculum vision at St Helen's CE Primary School**

**S** eeking Achievement for all  
**H** opeful through our Christian values  
**I** nspire through our knowledge rich curriculum  
**N** urturing and preparing for life through Jesus' love  
**E** mbracing equality and diversity



**Our LDST Prayer**

**Heavenly Father,**

**Let peace, friendship and love grow in our schools.**

**Send the Holy Spirit to give:**

**Excellence to our learning,**

**Love to our actions and**

**Joy to our worship.**

**Guide us to help others,**

**So that we may all**

**Learn, Love and Achieve, Together with Jesus.**

**Amen**

**"You are the light of the world...Let  
your light shine before others."**

**Matthew 5:16**



## *Introduction*

Any money owed to school has an impact on the budget and may affect the resources we can provide to all children. We hope that parents understand this and will make every effort to avoid owing the school money.

The school will take all reasonable measures to collect debts as part of its management of public funds and will make all parents aware of this policy and the school's procedures by being sent a letter as shown in the Appendix. This policy and information will also be published on the school website.

### *1. Breakfast and After-School Clubs*

As per the agreement and offer letter signed by the parent/carer, we recommend that payment is made a minimum of one week in advance and a credit balance is maintained at all times. Payment is required for all days booked even if the child does not attend, the exceptions being when school is closed. Should the child no longer require a place the parent/carer is to advise the School Office at least one week in advance, otherwise the parent/carer is still liable for charges. Should the parent/carer fall into arrears and fail to make an immediate payment, the club place will be suspended until the arrears are paid. If the balance is not cleared within one week, then this place may be withdrawn.

### *2. School Meals*

We recommend that payment for school meals is made a minimum of one week in advance and a credit balance is maintained at all times. Should the parent/carer fall into arrears of **more than one week** and fail to make a payment within one week of receiving a reminder letter, a further final letter will be sent advising the parent/carer that their debt will possibly be transferred to a debt recovery agency. All pupils who are not Free School Meal eligible are required to pay for a meal from Year 3 onwards.

*Parents who are in arrears of one week will be required to provide their child with lunch and snacks until the balance has been cleared.*

### **3. Educational Visits / Residential**

Letters will be sent home in advance of an Educational Visit or Residential taking place. All payments for trips will be collected in advance of the trip taking place, the time frame will be dependent on when payment by the school has to be made to the provider.

#### 4. *Reporting of Outstanding Debt Levels*

The Headteacher/School Business Manager will ensure that the level of outstanding debt is regularly monitored. Suitable records will be maintained to detail individual debts and the total value of debt to the school in order that it can be determined at anytime and reported to the Governing Body. The Governing Body will review the level of outstanding debts every term to determine whether this level is acceptable and whether action to recover debts is effective. Details of all reminders will be maintained in school. Where a letter is issued, a copy must be retained on file.

#### 5. **Debt Recovery Procedures**

##### **Breakfast Club / After School Club**

Where payment from the parent/carer has not been received for Breakfast Club / After School Club, the following process should be applied;

##### *Text/Email 'overdue payment' reminder*

All bookings and payments should be made by families on the Friday of the week before. If by the following Monday morning or first day of the school week, no payment has been made for the week, a text/email will be sent advising of the amount of payment required.

##### *First 'overdue payment' reminder letter*

If by the following Monday morning no payment has been made the 1<sup>st</sup> formal reminder letter (Appendix 1) will be sent home advising if full payment is not received immediately their child's breakfast club/after-school club place WILL be suspended.

##### *Second 'overdue payment' reminder letter*

If full payment is not received by two days after the first letter has been sent, the 2<sup>nd</sup> formal reminder letter (*Appendix 2*) will be sent home advising their child's breakfast club/after-school club place HAS been suspended for the following week. Payment or a repayment plan must be made that week, otherwise the place will be cancelled. A follow up phone call will be made the next day to the parent/carer as they will need to make alternative arrangements for their child.

##### *Third (FINAL) 'overdue payment' reminder letter*

If by the following Monday no payment or response is made, the 3<sup>rd</sup> formal reminder letter (*Appendix 3*) will be sent home advising this is a 'Final Reminder', payment must

be received by the Friday of that week otherwise the child's place WILL be cancelled and will result in the school taking possibly legal action.

### **School Meals**

Where payment from the parent/carer has not been received for School Meals, the following process will apply;

#### *1<sup>st</sup> Text/Email 'overdue payment' reminder*

If by the Friday morning or the last day of the school week, no payment has been made for that week, a text/email will be sent advising of the amount of payment required.

#### *2<sup>nd</sup> Text/Email 'overdue payment' reminder*

If by Monday mornings or last day of the school week, no payment has been made for the current week, a text/email will be sent advising of the amount of payment required.

#### *First 'overdue payment' reminder letter*

If by 2 days after the second text/email no payment has been made, the 1<sup>st</sup> formal reminder letter (Appendix 4) will be sent home advising if full payment is not received immediately it may result in the school taking possible legal action.

#### *Phone Call reminder*

If by the end of the week, no payment has been made a phone call home will be made advising if full payment is not received immediately it may result in the school taking possible legal action. **Parents who are in arrears of two weeks will be required to make alternative lunch arrangements until the balance has been cleared.**

#### *Second / Continuous 'overdue payment' reminder letter*

If by the Monday of the following week no payment has been made, the 2<sup>nd</sup> formal reminder letter (Appendix 5) will be sent home advising if full payment is not received immediately it may result in the school taking possible legal action. This letter will be continually updated to reflect the amount of outstanding debt and sent home weekly until the debt has been cleared/recovered.

### **Educational Visits / Residentials**

Where payment from the parent/carer has not been received for Educational Visits /Residentials, the following process will apply;

#### *1<sup>st</sup> Text/Email 'payment' reminder*

Text/email to be sent one week before the payment deadline issued on the letters, to remind parents/carers of the date payment needs to be made by.

#### *2<sup>nd</sup> Text/Email 'payment' reminder*

Text/email to be sent one day before the payment deadline issued on the letters, to remind parents/carers of the date payment needs to be made by and advise that the trip may not go ahead if not enough contributions are made.

#### *Continuous Text/Email 'payment' reminder*

Texts/emails are to be sent at regular intervals following the payment deadline, to remind parents/carers that payment needs to be made by and advise that the trip may not go ahead if not enough contributions are made.

### **6. *Negotiation of repayment terms***

Debtors are expected to settle the amount owed by a single payment as soon as possible after receiving the first 'overdue payment' reminder. Failure to meet any repayment terms will result in the school taking possible legal action.

*However, if people are unable to pay;*

The School may reduce or cancel a debt under exceptional circumstances. A sensitive approach to debt recovery will be carried out, taking the following factors into account.

- Hardship – where paying the debt would cause financial hardship.
- Ill health – where our recovery action might cause further ill health.
- Time – where the debt is so large compared to the person's income that it would take an unreasonable length of time to pay it all off.
- Cost – where the value of the debt is less than the cost of recovering it.
- Multiple debts – where someone owes more than one debt to the School. In this situation an attempt to agree one repayment plan to include all debts will be established.

If a debtor requests for 'repayment terms' these may be negotiated at the discretion of the Headteacher. A record of all such agreements entered in to will be retained. In all

cases, a letter will be issued to the debtor confirming the agreed terms for repayment. The settlement period should be the shortest that is judged reasonable. The Headteacher will decide whether any debtor who has been granted extended settlement terms will not be offered any further 'credit' and in future will be required to pay in advance.

#### *7. Costs of debt recovery*

Where the school incurs material additional costs in recovering a debt then the Governing Body will decide whether to seek to recover such costs from the debtor. The debtor will be formally advised in writing that they will be required to pay the additional costs incurred by the school in recovering the debt. This decision and its basis will be recorded and reported to the Governing Body.

## Debt Recovery Process

### **Breakfast Club / After School Club**

**1. 'Overdue Payment' reminder text/email**

Sent home on Monday morning if payment for the previous week has not been made.

**2. First 'overdue payment' reminder letter**

First day of the following school week no payment has been made advising that their  
child's club place WILL be suspended

**3. Second 'overdue payment' reminder letter**

Sent 2 days the 1<sup>st</sup> formal reminder letter advising club place HAS been suspended. Follow up phone call will be made the next day.

**4. Third (FINAL) 'overdue payment' reminder letter**

Sent on the Monday of the following week when no payment or response is made, advising it is a Final reminder and their child's place WILL be

### **School Meals**

**1.1<sup>st</sup> Text/Email 'overdue payment' reminder**

Sent home on Monday morning if payment for the previous week has not been made.

**2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Text/Email 'overdue payment' reminder**

First day of the following school week no payment has been made week.

**3. First 'overdue payment' reminder letter**

Sent 2 days after the second text/email,

**4. Phone Call reminder**

Made at the end of the second week of no payment received. Parent to pack lunch until balance has been cleared.

**5. Second/Continuous 'overdue payment' reminder letter**

Sent Monday of the following week following no payment. Advising if full payment is not received immediately it may result in the school taking possible legal action. Letter to be updated and sent home regularly.

**Recovery process to cease at payment stage.**

**If a payment plan to recover debt is required, ensure parent/carer signs one copy of the plan and returns it to the school office where it will be kept on file.**

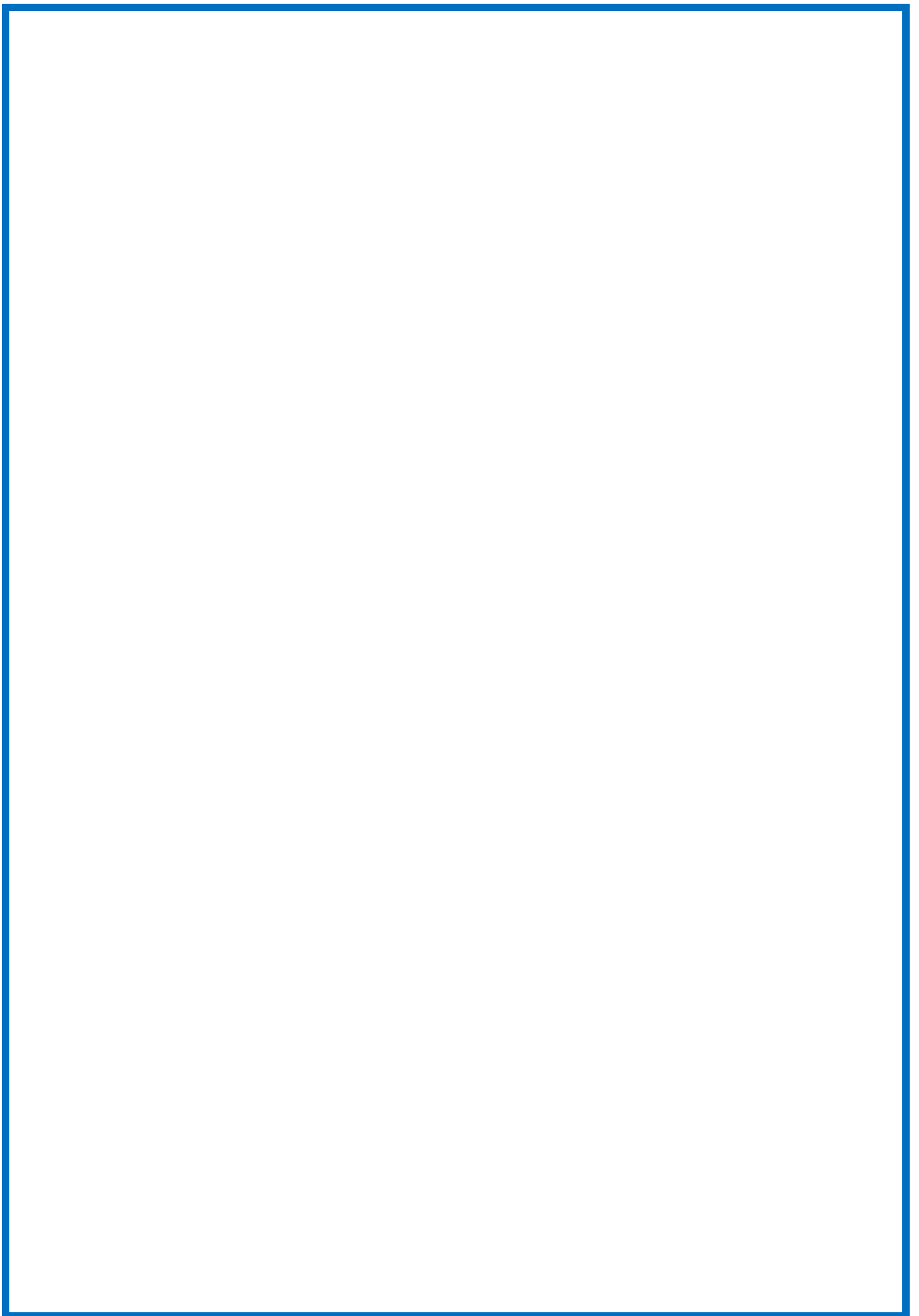
Signed by:

Chair of Governors: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Headteacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Agreed at the Governing Body Meeting on

\_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX 1: 1<sup>st</sup> 'Overdue Payment' Reminder Letter (Club)

### Overdue Payment Reminder

<date>

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: 1<sup>st</sup> overdue payment reminder for <child's full name> Class <classname>

I am writing to remind you that according to our records, you have arrears on your child's <breakfast club / after school club> account. In order, for your child to continue attending this provision it is important to keep your account in credit.

*Our records show that <child's full name> Class<class name> at <date> your debt is <balance>.*

Please arrange for this to be paid immediately. You can pay using the My Ed App, using the login previously sent to you.

You can check your balance at any time logging in to your account on Iris Plus Pay.

Non-payment affects the quality of service we are able to offer to the children therefore we need to ensure that all payments are up to date. Once the debt is cleared, please be reminded that your account must always be in credit.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, or are having difficulty making the payment, please contact the school office to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

School Business Manager

<name>

## APPENDIX 2: 2<sup>nd</sup> 'Overdue Payment' Reminder Letter (Club)

### Overdue Payment Reminder

<date>

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: 2<sup>nd</sup> overdue payment reminder for <child's full name> Class <classname>

Our records show that despite numerous reminders you have still not made payments on your <breakfast club / after school club > account for <child's full name> Class<class name> at <date>.

As a result of non-payment, your child's <breakfast club / after school club / nursery> place will be suspended with effect from <date>.

*As at <date> your account is showing a debt of <balance>.*

Please make arrangement for this payment to be made immediately or contact the School Office to make a payment plan, non-compliance may result in legal action.

Should payment not be received by <date> your child's < breakfast club / after school club> place will be cancelled.

Please arrange for this to be paid immediately. You can check your balance at any time logging in to your account on Iris Plus Pay.

*Please note, should your child's place be cancelled, we cannot guarantee a place for them in the future.*

If you have any queries, please contact the school office to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

School Business Manager

<name>

### Appendix 3: 3<sup>rd</sup> Final Reminder (Club)

#### FINAL REMINDER

<date>

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Final Reminder for <child's full name> Class <classname>

It has come to my attention that despite numerous reminders that you still have an outstanding balance on your <breakfast club / after school club > account for <child's fullname> Class<class name> at <date>.

*As at <date> your account is showing a debt of <balance>.*

If your balance is not cleared by <date> your child's <breakfast club / after school club> place will be cancelled. Please be aware, we will not be able to guarantee a place for your child in the future once the place has been cancelled.

Once the debt is cleared and should you wish your child to resume <breakfast club / after school club > please contact the School Office to discuss availability, registration and regular payments.

To make payment, by logging in to your account on Iris Plus Pay.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher

<name>

## APPENDIX 4: 1<sup>st</sup> 'Overdue Payment' Reminder Letter (Meals)

### Overdue Payment Reminder

<date>

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Overdue payment reminder for <child's full name> Class <classname>

I am writing to remind you that according to our records, you have arrears on your child's SchoolMeals account. It is important to keep your account in credit.

*Our records show that <child's full name> Class<class name> at <date> your debt is <balance>.*

Please arrange for this to be paid immediately. You can check your balance at any time and pay using Parent Pay, using the login previously sent to you or the link below.

<https://app.parentpay.com/public/client/security/v2/#/login>

Non-payment affects the quality of service we are able to offer to the children therefore we need to ensure that all payments are up to date. Once the debt is cleared, please be reminded that your account must always be in credit.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, or are having difficulty making the payment, please contact the school office to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

School Business Manager

<name>

## APPENDIX 5: 2<sup>nd</sup> 'Overdue Payment' Reminder Letter

### Overdue Payment Reminder

<date>

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Overdue payment reminder for <child's full name> Class <classname>

I am writing to remind you that according to our records, you have arrears on your child's SchoolMeals account.

Non-payment affects the quality of service we are able to offer to the children therefore we need to ensure that all payments are up to date. Once the debt is cleared, please be reminded that your account must always be in credit.

*Our records show that <child's full name> Class<class name> at <date> your debt is <balance>.*

Please arrange for this to be paid immediately. You can check your balance at any time and pay using Parent Pay, using the login previously sent to you or the link below.

<https://app.parentpay.com/public/client/security/v2/#/login>

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, or are having difficulty making the payment, please contact the school office to discuss this further.