

## School Meals Debt Policy for Parents

Ark Victoria Academy has a strict **NO DEBT** policy relating to the school meal service.

If debts are incurred, then the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education to buy books, paper, pencils, paint or educational activities etc is used to pay for debts incurred by parents. We are sure all parents will agree that this is unacceptable and we request that they give this policy their full support.

As most parents appreciate no-one would take their child to a restaurant and expect them to be given food without paying; the same applies at school. If parents believe that their children may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals please contact the office for more details. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that you use it if you qualify. We will help you all we can with your application.

Parents must pay in advance for the school meals using online Parent Pay or a Parent Pay paypoint card.

Children will not be provided with a school lunch unless it is paid for, 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 weeks meals £11.50 for Primary and £12.00 for Secondary. However, this must be paid by the end of the week and future meals must be paid in advance before any meal is provided.

If the debt is still outstanding at £11.50 or £12.00 and above, parents must provide a packed lunch. In a case when debt payment is not received nor a packed lunch provided, the office will phone the parent to ask them to come to school with the money. Otherwise they must provide sandwiches before lunch time.

If payment of the debt is not received by the next day, we reserve the right to take further action against parents to recover the debt.

Please also note at the beginning of each half term for *primary students only* we will ask which meal plan the child will be having, packed lunch or school dinners, during the half term this meal plan **cannot** be changed. This ensures all parents will be charged correctly according to which meal plan their child has chosen.

We hope that by implementing this debt policy we are able to help parents manage school dinner money better and at the same time ensure that all money that is for children's learning is available.

If you have any concerns please don't hesitate in contacting the school.