



Date of Policy Review:	Reviewer:	Date Ratified by Governors:	Date Shared with Staff:	Date of Next Review:
13/02/18	MR	28/03/2018	29/03/2018	28/03/2019

Article 28: Children have a right to a good quality education

Article 29: Children have the right to an education which develops their interests, talents and abilities

Rights Respecting Schools

As a Rights-Respecting School, we use children’s rights to underpin everything we do and learn. Marlborough Primary School has been working closely with [UNICEF](#), and is a 'Rights Respecting' School. The term is bestowed on those schools who, in the eyes of UNICEF, put the '[UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)', (UNCRC) at the heart of their planning, policies, practice and ethos.

UNCRC is a list of rights that all children, everywhere in the world, have. The rights are all the things that children and young people need to make sure they are healthy, happy and safe. A rights-respecting school not only teaches about children's rights, but also models rights and respect in all its relationships: between adults and children, between children themselves, and between adults themselves.

Data Protection Statement

The procedures and practice created by this policy have been reviewed in the light of our Data Protection Policy. All data will be handled in accordance with the school’s Data Protection Policy.

Data Audit for this Policy					
What?	Probable Content	Why?	Who?	Where?	When?
Debt / Arrears information for school payments	Name D.O.B. Address Telephone Parental Details of Debtor Amount of debt	To ensure appropriate use of school’s budget and to comply with financial regulations	All parents/carers whose accounts are in debt	School’s Information Management System Paper Version of entitlement is Shredded ParentPay	Held on File whilst in debt Computer Retains Copy of Records in ‘Archive’

As such, our assessment is that this policy:

Has Few / No Data Compliance Requirements	Has A Moderate Level of Data Compliance Requirements	Has a High Level of Data Compliance Requirements
✓		

Debt Management Policy

Rationale

This policy has been compiled recognising the difficulties placed on the school in balancing the social welfare of pupils with the responsibility of managing the School Budget.

Hot Meals

Marlborough Primary School has adopted a strict NO DEBT policy relating to school meals. Money owed affects the school's overall budget and must be settled promptly. All accounts should be in credit for a hot meal to be served.

Universal Free School Meals

All children from Reception to Year 2 are offered hot school meals free of charge under the Government's 'Universal Free Meals' initiative. However, children who reach Year 3 must pay for hot meals unless the family is in receipt of 'free school meals' and the school can be provided with evidence to prove this in advance of continuing with a hot meal option.

A child's entitlement to Free School Meals (FSM) is determined by criteria outlined on the Harrow Council website and it is the parents' responsibility to ensure that they apply for free meals. FSM payments cannot be backdated and any debt incurred by late application for Free School Meals must be paid by the parent concerned.

Debt recovery – Non Payment of school meals

- All school meals need to be paid for in advance using ParentPay, the school's online payment service.
- When a pupil does not have credit on their hot meal account the school may allow a meal to be provided where it is felt that this is an emergency situation. Details of this are recorded by the Finance Admin Officer, after having spoken to the parent(s) concerned.
- Where a pupil continues to require meals and no payment is made, a letter is sent (or phone call / 'school comms' text) informing parents that they must either clear the outstanding debt or provide a packed lunch for the child.
- If parents fail to provide either payment or a suitable meal, a referral can be made to Children's Services on the grounds of neglect.
- When a parent genuinely forgets to pay dinner money the school may grant a debt allowance of 1 meal. The school will contact the parents advising them of the situation and the amount outstanding. This debt must be cleared the next day and future meals must be paid for in advance before any meal is provided.
- In the case when, after letters have been sent home and debt is still outstanding and a packed lunch is not provided, parents will be phoned to come to school with the money immediately and provide a packed lunch or take the child home for lunch.
- If the outstanding debt remains unpaid the school will take Debt Recovery Action with any debts amounting to over £100 referred to Harrow Council's Debt Collection team.
- Children's Services may be informed that parents are not carrying out their legal responsibility of duty of care by not providing food for their child at lunchtime.

Music Tuition – Debt Recovery

Peripatetic Music Tuition is an optional extra-curricular activity that parents choose their child to participate in. As such, parents are invited to pay for the music tuition in advance of the lessons commencing. Where payment is not made, pupils will not continue with lessons.

Parents will be sent a reminder before the debt is passed to Harrow Council. After four weeks of lessons, where a child continues to learn from one academic year to the next, and payment is not received, parents will be informed in writing that their child's lessons will cease forthwith.

Trips/Activities

Where activities take place, and parents choose to send their children on them, eg Year 5 and 6 residential trips, they are expected to pay in full, in advance. Where cheques are paid, which subsequently 'bounce', after two written reminders the debt is passed to Harrow Council to pursue.

Offsetting of Income

If a parent owes money to the school, but is in credit with another activity, for example the parent has paid for a trip which is subsequently cancelled, the school has the right to offset some/or all of the credit towards settlement of the debt before issuing any refunds to the parent. Similarly, if a parent is in debt for an activity, ie music tuition or a residential trip, but then pays for an alternative item, such as another residential trip, the school has the right to offset the income to the previous debt.

Where debts occur at the end of the summer term, and remain unpaid when the child leaves the school, the school reserves the right to pass the debt to younger siblings if they are still on roll at the school. Debts which remain if a child leaves the school will be pursued via email/letter and passed to Harrow Council to pursue if they are significant sums of money.

Breakfast/After School Club

Parents are expected to pay in advance for their child's attendance at the Breakfast and/or After School Clubs. Any debt amounting to £50 or more for After School Club (ie one week's attendance) or £20 for the Breakfast Club (ie one week's attendance) will result in the parent being contacted and informed that their child's place at the club(s) will cease until payment has been received. Any parents with debts amounting to more than £100 will be passed to Harrow Council to pursue and the child's place at the club will be cancelled.