

**Blaydon West Primary School**

**School Dinners/ Breakfast Club Policy**

**December 2017**

## **At Blaydon West Primary School, EVERY child matters**

The Children and Families Act 2014 places a legal duty on all state-funded schools in England to offer a free school lunch to all pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 from September 2014.

Blaydon West Primary School is responsible for the collection and reconciliation of all school dinner money for children in Years 3 to 6 and is also responsible for all arrears and non-payments.

Parents/carers are responsible for providing a lunch for their child(ren) in Years 3 to 6. This may be in the form of a paid meal, application for a free school meal entitlement or a packed lunch from home.

Parents/carers must pay for school meals IN ADVANCE unless their child(ren) have a free school meal entitlement. Application forms for free school meals are available from the school office or from the Gateshead Council website.

Blaydon West Primary School has a clear set of procedures for the payment and collection of school dinner money and any arrears that occur.

### **Meal Arrangements:**

- Pupils from Reception to Year 6 should choose their meal preference, ie school dinner or packed lunch, at the beginning of the week. Once they have made their choice they are unable to change it until the following Monday.
- Should a pupil forget to bring their packed lunch, or due to exceptional circumstances, then a school meal will be provided. Payment for meals of this nature is due on the day the meal has been taken or the following day at the latest.

### **Meal Charges:**

- The revision of charges for school meals will take place as and when the school is informed of a price increase by Gateshead Council.

### **Meal Payments:**

- All parents/carers are expected to pay for school meals unless the pupil is in receipt of a free school meal.
- Payments can be made in cash or by cheque made payable to Gateshead Council.
- A full dinner money statement is available from the school office, detailing meals taken and payments made. A charge may be made for this service if constant requests are made.
- If your child is absent from school, and meals have been paid for, these will be carried forward as credits and the following week's payments will be adjusted accordingly. If credits continue to the end of term they will be carried forward to the following term.

**Repayment of Meal Debt:**

- Reminders will be sent to parents/carers who have not paid for school meals that week. Parents/carers may also be contacted by telephone.
- Should arrears total one week then parents/carers will be required to send packed lunches for their child(ren) until the debt is cleared.
- In the event that a school dinner is expected when arrears stand at one week then parents/carers will be contacted and will be expected to bring a packed lunch to school for lunchtime time that day.  
Failure to do so will result in a cessation of service letter has been issued to the parent/carer
- Once a cessation of service letter has been issued a parent/carer will not have the option of transferring back to school meals unless the debt has been cleared. If the debt has been cleared the child will be allowed to transfer back to school meals; however, meals will only be provided if paid for in advance. If payment is NOT received in advance then the meal service will cease immediately.
- In the event that the debt is not recovered, and packed lunches are not provided from home, the school reserves the right to request advice and assistance and share information with other Services.
- Debts will be carried over between terms and remain with the child across the years in school to allow the maximum time for arrears to be recovered. Debts will not be written off unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- The school will always inform parents via a written letter of how much they owe. Receipt of this letter will be used as evidence should the claim progress to small claims.

**Recovery of Meal Debt:**

- If no money is received by the due date the debt will be passed to the small claims court. This will incur a £25.00 fee which will also be added to the arrears.
- In some circumstances parents may be able to access additional support from a hardship fund.

Policy ratified - Full Governors November 2017