



Dinner Money Policy

Policy Updated	November 2021
Policy Agreed	December 2022
To be Reviewed	November 2023

ST MALACHY'S SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

- ❖ St. Malachy's is a Catholic School where we will all do our best to do the work of Jesus.
 - ❖ We will study, pray, play and celebrate together.
 - ❖ We will care for each other and look after each other, just like a big family.
- ❖ It is important to remember that we are all good and clever in different ways.
 - ❖ We will learn important lessons that will help us when we are grown up.
 - ❖ In our school it will be fun and we will strive to make it a safe place.

ST. MALACHY'S R C PRIMARY SCHOOL DINNER MONEY POLICY

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

The school will take all reasonable measures to vigorously collect debts as part of its management of public funds.

The school's dinner money policy will observe the relevant financial regulations and guidance set out in the Scheme for Financing Schools and any other legal requirements, including Manchester City Council Audit.

Dinner money payments must be paid via **Evolve**.

If you are entitled to free school meals, you need to show a letter confirming your benefit entitlement to the school office. If you are unable to provide proof of entitlement immediately, or your child's name does not subsequently appear on the Free School Meal checker (accessible via the Manchester City Council website), we ask that you provide your child with a packed lunch until eligibility is confirmed.

Payment of Dinner Money

The Governors expect that dinner money should be paid in advance of meals being taken; payment should be made by Monday for the coming week.

Debt Recovery Procedures

Where payment from the parent/carer has not been received in advance, the following process will be applied:

First 'overdue payment' reminder

If payment has not been received by the *Friday* of week one, then parents/carers will receive a First 'Overdue Payment' Reminder by text, stating that payments should be made in advance and one week's dinner money is owed".

An initial reminder may be informal and can be made either in person (when a parent/carer comes to collect/drop off the child), The date and details of the initial reminder will be recorded.

Second 'overdue payment' reminder

If money owed is not forthcoming a text will be sent home on the *Tuesday* (Second 'Overdue Payment' Text) confirming that a payment is required for the previous week and if the child wants to continue to have school lunches, an additional payment is required. The payment required should cover the costs of both the previous and current week. (Payment for two weeks)

Third 'overdue payment' reminder

If payment has not been received by the *Thursday* of the second week and a packed lunch has not been provided by the parent/carer, this will mean that there is two weeks outstanding money.

A further text will be sent on the *Thursday* of the second week (Third 'Overdue Payment' text) if money owed is still not received. The parent/carer will be advised that in the event on non-payment a packed lunch must be provided on the following *Monday* (Week 3). Parent/carers will also be directed to the current Dinner Money Policy either via the School App or on the School Website.

Failure to respond to reminders / settle a debt

If there is no response to the third 'overdue payment' reminder text and no engagement with the school office staff, the debtor will be invited to meet the School Business Manager or Head teacher and in some cases a member of the Governing Body to discuss how the debt will be settled.

Reporting of outstanding debt levels

The Head teacher 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 any time and reported to the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee will review the level of outstanding debts every term to determine whether this level is acceptable and whether action to recover debts is effective.

If people are unable to pay

The School will carry out a sensitive approach to debt recovery. If you feel you have any special circumstances and need to discuss these with school please make an appointment to speak to the Head teacher, so that debts don't mount up and arrangements can be made to pay money owing as soon as possible.