Debt Recovery Policy
VERSION: November 2025
REVIEW: November 2027

Statement of intent

The governing body has a duty to ensure Ashby Hill Top Primary School receives all the funds to which it is entitled. This policy has been created to ensure the appropriate procedures are in place to deal with debts and the recovery of assets.

It encompasses all debts owed to the school including, but not limited to, payments for goods, services, school trips and school meal payments.

Parents should be made aware of, and given access to, this policy and the school's debt recovery procedures. It will be included on the school's website and made available to view at the school on request.

The principles

- The governing body will not write off any debt which exceeds £500
- A full record will be kept of debts owed to the school for 7 years. This will include all letters requesting money, reminders and invoices
- The school will initiate legal action to recover debt
- School meal debt may not exceed £25, after this point the option of taking a school meal will be withdrawn.

Roles and responsibilities

The headteacher and school business manager will ensure that:

- Letters requesting money are accurately recorded and those records maintained
- Evidence of the steps taken by the school in pursuance of debt is recorded, including dates and times of both letters and phone calls
- A final reminder will be sent by recorded delivery to the debtor after 8 weeks of commencement of debt
- Family cases will be judged fairly and according to the circumstances of the family involved
- The privacy of the family involved will be respected and they will only be made known to those who need to know
- The level of outstanding debt can be determined at any time, except for school meal debt which is set at £25

The governing body:

- Must approve any legal action taken
- Record approved actions in the minutes of the relevant meeting
- Will adhere to the privacy arrangements

The process for pursuing debts

- Informal reminder: The debtor will be informally reminded, in person, by text or by telephone, that they owe money to the school

- First reminder letter: If the debt is yet to be paid two weeks after an informal reminder, a formal letter will be sent to the debtor

- Second reminder letter: If the debt is yet to be paid two weeks after a first formal reminder, a second formal letter will be sent to the debtor. These letters allow the debtor every opportunity to settle their debt and ensure the school can prove all reasonable steps have been taken to recover the debt should the issue proceed further

- Final reminder letter: If no response has been received following the second reminder after 6 weeks the school will send a letter to the debtor advising them that they will be referring the matter to consider legal action. This letter will be sent by recorded delivery to ensure the debtor has had every chance to respond.

- Possible legal action: at this juncture, the appropriate body will decide whether to take legal action against the debtor.

Waiving of debts

- The waiving of debts is at the discretion of the headteacher and the governing body. A debt may be waived when it is believed the debtor is experiencing serious financial hardship, or if all reasonable avenues to recover the debt have been exhausted and it is believed it would not be cost effective to pursue the debt through legal action.

- The headteacher is authorised to waive debts of up to £100.

- Debts between £100 and £500 will only be waived with the approval of the governing body.

- Debts of £500 or more will never be waived.