

# Tornedale Infant Academy



## SCHOOL MEALS DEBT POLICY

| VERSION | AUTHOR | SUMMARY OF CHANGES | DATE PUBLISHED | DATE OF REVIEW |
|---------|--------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1.0     | AJB    | New Policy         | July 2026      | July 2029      |
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## **1. AIMS**

Tornedale Infant Academy is committed to the safety and welfare of all pupils. The City of Doncaster Council's School Catering Team ensure our pupils have access to nourishing and healthy food at lunch time. This supports our pupil's wellbeing and enables them to learn and develop effectively.

As an infant school, only nursery children pay for school meals; Reception to Year 2 are paid as part of the Universal Infant Free School meals scheme. We recognise that the majority of our families are supportive of the Academy and ensure payment for all nursery meals in advance. This policy is intended to outline our clear procedures and protocols for those occasions where debt does accumulate on a child's school meal account. The policy is intended to protect limited school resources whilst ensuring that the parents/carers do not face a rising and unmanageable debt.

School budgets are very limited and costs are incurred in providing a school catering service. Prompt and advance payment by parents/carers ensures that we are able to utilise our financial resources effectively and in line with government guidance, which is, for the education of the pupils of the school.

## **2. PAYMENT**

Nursery meals must be paid for. Parent/carers are able to make payment for school meals using our online secure payment platform <https://pmx.parentmail.co.uk/> or by cash at the school office. Individual login details will be provided to parents/carers as soon as their child starts Tornedale Infant Academy.

## **3. FREE SCHOOL MEALS**

Nursery pupils who attend full days and are entitled to free school meals will not be charged for meals taken on their full days. If parents request a meal be provided on their half day, parents will be charged the standard rate for this meal.

If any Parents/Carers believe that their child may qualify for entitlement to Targeted or Expanded Free School meals they should contact the City of Doncaster Council for more details. Further details are available on our school website [Tornedale Infant Academy - School Meals & Menus](#).

This allowance is a statutory entitlement, and it is important that you apply for it if you are eligible - even if your child currently receives free meals through the Universal Infant Free School Meals Scheme. Children who are formally approved for "Targeted" Free School Meals by the Local Authority receive additional benefits and concessions throughout the Academy.

## **4. PARENTMAIL ACCOUNT – DEBT MANAGEMENT**

Each week, usually on a Friday, Admin staff will send out a reminder to nursery parents/carers where any sum of money, regardless of amount, is owing on the account.

Parents/carers are asked to clear this debt as soon as possible and provide additional funds to cover next week's meals.

Where a debt payment is not received following a further reminder, the Academy will phone the parent/carer to ask them to come to school with the money or ask them to pay online immediately.

Where the debt continues to remain unpaid and the balance reaches £29.50 or more, letters will be sent out to the parents' email addresses on the school system asking parents to clear the debt or set up a suitable payment plan to address the arrears.

Where nursery balances are in excess of £44.25 in debt and no payment plan has been agreed or adhered to, parents will be offered the opportunity to change their nursery session so it does not include a school meal or provide an adequate, healthy packed lunch for their child to access at lunch time.

In addition, if the debt continues to remain unpaid school reserves the right to begin legal proceedings against parents/carers to recover the debt.

It is recognised that the majority of families do ensure that all school meals are paid for in advance. We also understand that circumstances change for some families, over the course of their child's time with us and any parents/carers experiencing difficulties in making payments for school meals are encouraged to contact the School Business Manager as soon as possible, to enable appropriate support to be provided.

## **5. REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Headteacher/Governing Body or sooner if changes are required.