

Acorn Multi Academy Trust Debt Recovery Policy

Introduction

The Directors have a responsibility for ensuring that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the Acorn Multi Academy Trust to receive all income to which it is entitled. For this reason it is important that the MAT has a policy for dealing with debts which is approved by the Board of Directors.

Parents should be made aware of this policy and the procedures by being sent a copy of the policy. A copy of this policy will also be published on the website.

Principles

- Each academy within the MAT will actively pursue debtors, including parents/carers for the collection of monies owed to it.
- The Executive Head, Senior Administrator and administrators will ensure that:
 - all letters requesting monies outstanding are accurately recorded and maintained;
 - there is documentary evidence of all the steps undertaken by the academy to recover the debt and this includes recording the dates that letters and statements were sent, and/or phone calls that have been made to debtors;
 - for all outstanding debts, a final statement is issued by recorded delivery to the person(s) liable for the charge;
 - each case involving a family will be judged on the family's individual circumstances and the amount outstanding as to the length of time before legal action is started;
 - the identity of a family involved is only disclosed to those who need to know under this policy.
- The Board of Directors:
 - must consider the arrangements for debt recovery;
 - must approve the academy undertaking legal action in any particular case;
 - must include in the minutes of its meeting or record of its decision, its approval to pursue any outstanding debt;
 - will ensure that the identity of a family involved is only disclosed to those who need to know under this policy;
 - may delegate its responsibilities under this policy to the Finance & Audit Committee
- Pursuance of Debt
The academy should:
 - give the debtor appropriate notification and time to pay the outstanding charge;
 - send the debtor as a minimum a final statement by recorded delivery, which states that this is the final notice and that further action will be taken.
- Waiving of Debt
A debt may be written off or waived by resolution of the Board of Directors on the recommendation of the Executive Head. A recommendation to write off or waive a debt can be made by the Executive Head when either
 - a. all reasonable avenues to recover the debt have been exhausted, and where it is not cost effective to pursue the debt through legal action; or
 - b. it is believed the debtor is experiencing financial hardship.

Sales – Uniform, bottles etc.

All items purchased through the academy office must be paid for in advance.

Trips, Residentials and Non-school based activities

Voluntary contributions may be sought for activities during the school day which entail additional costs, i.e. school trips, residentials and visiting organisations. In these circumstances no child will be prevented from participating because a contribution is not received. However, if insufficient total funds are received the activity may be cancelled.

Pre-school Fees

Invoices for the pre-school fees are sent out at the beginning of each term. Fees may be paid in two instalments both within two weeks of each half term or by regular instalments with prior agreement. If fees are not paid within the time scales the Executive Head reserves the right to suspend the child from attending or he/she will only be able to attend for the 15 hours funded allocation until the debt is cleared.

Fees continue to be payable if a child is absent for any reason including illness or holidays taken in term time.

School Meals

The Board of Directors of Acorn Multi Academy Trust has adopted a **NO DEBT** policy relating to the provision of school meals. This means that all money for school meals must be **PAID IN ADVANCE**. In exceptional circumstances credit of £10 will be extended. Once this limit is reached no school meals will be allowed to be booked until the debt is cleared.

Pupil Premium

Children in receipt of Free School Meals are eligible for Pupil Premium Funding and Acorn Multi Academy Trust may use part of the Pupil Premium money received to help pay for Educational Visits, swimming lessons, part funding of residential trips and full cost of any after school clubs run by the school (excludes clubs run by external organisations) and to assist with the purchase of school uniform.

Policy Review

Adopted: May 2016

Date of next review: May 2018