PRIMARY SCHOOL MEALS

UP FRONT PAYMENT FOR SCHOOL MEALS POLICY

**Lifelong Learning**

December 2017

1. **Introduction**

This policy is to highlight the need for parents to pay upfront for school meals at their primary schools, in previous years, the Local Authority has had to cover aggregated debts of tens of thousands of pounds.

**2.0 Who this Policy applies to?**

This policy applies to all pupils who are not eligible for a free school meal and who do not bring a packed lunch to school

1. **General**

From the 1st of January 2018, the isle of Anglesey County Council will adopt a clear “up front payment for school meals” policy. This relates to the payment and provision of school meals.

This is to ensure that, other than where there is an entitlement to free school meals, parents or carers pay in advance for children’s meals.

Pupils will not be provided with a school meal unless it is paid for in advance

If a parent or carer genuinely forgets to pay in advance, the school may grant a debt allowance of ten meals.

If after the allowance of ten meals the parent or carer continues to send their child to school without either payment or a packed lunch, the School may consider the need to refer this matter to the social services department as a matter of child welfare.

The Debt of 10 meals will be transferred to the Authority who will seek to recover this.

1. **Process**
2. All schools are to ensure that the Llythyr Polisi / Policy Letter for school meals is provided to all parents. \*(Appendix A)
3. The school will contact the parent / carer if a child attends school and has no packed lunch or no means of payment for the school meal.
4. If no payment has been received and the debt is the cost of 5 meals the school will issue a PY18 Letter to the parents / Carer \*(Appendix B)
5. If no payment has been made by lunchtime on the following school day the school will contact the parent / carer to discuss this.
6. If no payment has been made and the debt has now increased to 10 meals the school will issue a PY19 Letter to the parent, \*(Appendix C)
7. If after this letter the parent continues to send child to school with no payment or a packed lunch the social services department may be informed once they have ensured that all of the steps in Appendix E have been followed
8. Only one debt of 10 meals can be transferred to the authority per pupil per academic year, if the steps in appendix E have not been followed and any further debt for each pupil will be paid for by the school out of the school’s Delegated Budget if the steps have not been followed and evidenced.
9. The School are to complete a PY21 form \*(please see appendix D) when requesting the transfer of the debt. The school are also to complete the document titled “Checklist for school meal debt \*(Please see appendix E) to ensure that all steps and comment boxes have been filled in before completing the PY21 form.
10. **Entitlement to a Free School Meal**

The Headteacher can only allow pupils to have a free school meal once the Benefits department have confirmed eligibility and the appropriate application forms have been completed by the parent or guardian concerned,

Free school meal entitlement is qualified through the parent / Guardian being in receipt of one of the following benefits: -

1. Income support.
2. Income based Job seekers allowance.
3. Support under part VI of the immigration and asylum Act 1999.
4. Income related employment and support allowance.
5. Child tax Credit provided they are not entitled to working tax credit and their annual income does not exceed £16,190. (HM Revenue and Customs are Responsible for assessing the level of annual income).
6. Guarantee element of state pension credit.
7. Working tax credit ‘Run on’ the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for working tax credit.
8. Universal Credit.

If a parent / Carer believe that their children may qualify for entitlement for free school meals, please contact the Isle of Anglesey County Council Benefits department for more details on 01248 750057. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that you use it.

To ensure that the Authority support families in times of hardship and uncertainty FSM entitlement will be backdated to the period determined by the Revenue and benefits Department and any debts for Meals provided in this time frame will no longer be pursued,

For parents / guardians who are in receipt of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction, the Benefit department will be  informed where a parent / guardian is no longer in receipt of the above benefits. This will result in a termination of Free School Meals . For parents / guardians who are not in receipt of  Housing Benefit/ Council Tax Reduction, eligibility will be checked bi-annually on the 1st of November and on the 1st of May. Any family who are deemed not to be entitled but who are receiving FSM on these dates will be informed by letter and given 1 weeks ‘notice to make other arrangements i.e. to provide a packed lunch for their children or to ensure that payment is received in advance for future meals.

1. **Current Debt**

Schools are to support parents who currently have a large amount of debt of over 10 meals by providing an option to repay the debt over an agreed period of time, whilst ensuing that no further debt is created.