



Bentham Community
Primary School

Bentham C P School
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Procedure for Collecting Payment Arrears

Bentham Community Primary School follows the North Yorkshire County Council recommended procedure for collecting payment arrears. This letter sets out procedures specific to Bentham Community Primary School that accompany North Yorkshire's procedures:-

1. The School will do everything possible to support families who are finding it difficult to make payments. Where this is the case, parents/carers are strongly encouraged to make an appointment to meet with the Headteacher in order to discuss their situation and to ascertain if any additional financial support is available from the school. Due to the sensitive nature of such discussions, school will not make assumptions and it is, therefore, vital that parents/carers approach the school should they require support to meet their school payment commitments. All discussions held and subsequent arrangements made are done so in the strictest of confidence.
2. Bentham Community Primary School arrears procedure does not apply where voluntary contributions are requested to cover the cost of trips and visits. However, text message reminders will be sent where contributions are not received to cover the cost of the visit. If enough parents are not willing to pay for a trip or visit then the school reserves the right to CANCEL the same. The purpose of text messages is to act as reminders not as final demands.
3. All payments required by school will be notified to parents via letters, text messages, Parentpay and sometimes the Friday News. In all cases a clear deadline for payment will be provided to parents.
4. In the case of school meal arrears an initial letter will be sent detailing the debt, this letter will give details of what support is available if the payment cannot be met together with details of where to locate an Application for Assistance with Free School Meals and Residential visits form/Free School Meal and Pupil Premium Key Stage 1 form. An extension of ten working days within which the payment should be received by school will be granted (Stage 1).
5. If, after this ten day extension, no payment or communication is received, a second letter will be sent. It is strongly recommended that parents/carers make an appointment with the school at this stage to discuss outstanding meal arrears. In some cases an instalment plan for payment might be reached with the school, or a decision made for parents/carers to provide their child with a packed lunch. A second reminder will also give parents notification that a referral will be made to North Yorkshire County Council's Welfare Team. This referral will be made 5 working days following the date of this letter. (Stage 2)
6. If no payment or communication is received 5 working days after the second letter is sent, a referral is made to North Yorkshire County Council's Welfare Team. (Stage 3)
7. As stated in North Yorkshire's Arrears Procedure, second stage arrears letters will be sent via First or Second Class post and not via a child. This is to ensure all correspondence is received by the parent/carer.
8. All letters will include details of how to seek support from school if required.

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