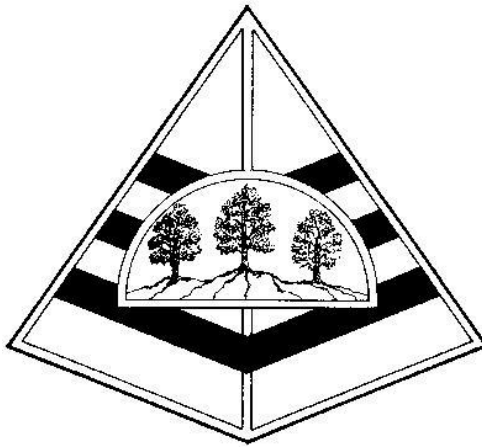


FERNDOWN MIDDLE SCHOOL



BAD DEBT PROCEDURES

Policy to be reviewed by Governor Committee:	Finance & Staffing Committee
Frequency:	2 Yearly

FERNDOWN MIDDLE SCHOOL

BAD DEBT PROCEDURES

General

Schools should have a policy in place for debt recovery. The writing off of debts should only be considered where appropriate recovery action has been exhausted or a cost benefit analysis indicates this to be uneconomic. The level of authorisation for a write off should be specified within the school's Finance Procedures Policy and will be dependent on the value of the debt involved.

The FMS Debt Recovery Procedures are as follows:

- If the account remains unpaid 30 days after the invoice is issued, a reminder should be sent. The reminder should show brief invoice details and request immediate payment; its issue should be documented;
- If the account remains unpaid after a further 30 days, a final notice should be sent. In addition to the invoice details it should indicate that legal action could be taken.

Procedures for charging:

Music Tuition Fees

- All music tuition fees for pupils outside of curriculum are charged direct to the parents from the Peripatetic teachers. Ferndown Middle School does not collect any music tuition fees on behalf of these teachers who will invoice the parents and will receive the fees direct from the parents.

Trips and Visits

- Parents/Guardians are made aware of trips and visits via letter which indicates cost, dates and deadlines for events. A return slip is incorporated for interested parties to send back to school by due date including a request for a deposit if appropriate.
- The Office Staff are responsible for collecting and monitoring the collection of money for trips, visits and visitors.
- If a parent/guardian has not met a payment a written request is issued by the office staff.
- If following this a parent/guardian has still not met a payment the office staff will make a call to the parent/guardian requesting payment.
- If the trip is a day trip and no money is paid the child is still entitled to participate. A trip can be cancelled if there are insufficient funds to cover the cost of the trip.
- If the trip is residential a deposit is required within a period of time to secure the place. If the deposit is not paid then the child will not be able to participate in the residential. (Subsidised places are available see Charging Policy). If a deposit is received but balance is not paid, this means the child will not go on the visit.

- Once a trip has been booked – the full cost becomes payable or this may be requested in instalments. No refunds will be given if the child subsequently withdraws.
- If a parent/guardian has outstanding debts in relation to a previous school trip, then future trips may not be booked until the existing debt has been paid in full.
- Information to parents/ guardians will include a timeline for payment of the trip.

Governors

If, after every effort has been made to collect the debt and legal action is considered impractical or has been unsuccessful; individual bad (irrecoverable) debts may be written off in accordance with the following procedures:

- a) Those up to the value of £500 to be approved by the Headteacher and reported to the next governing body meeting.
- b) Those exceeding £500 to be referred to the governing body for approval, either directly or after consideration by the Finance & Staffing Committee.