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Procedure for Collecting Payment Arrears

This document should be read in conjunction with the Charging and Remissions Document.

The **Goldsborough Sicklinghall Federation** follows the North Yorkshire County Council recommended procedure for collecting payment arrears. This document sets out procedures specific to the **Goldsborough Sicklinghall Federation** that accompany North Yorkshire's procedures:

1. The **Goldsborough Sicklinghall Federation** will do all possible to support families who are finding it difficult to make payments. Where this is the case, parents/carers are strongly encouraged to meet with the Headteacher to discuss their situation and to find out whether additional support is available. Due to the sensitive nature of such discussions, school will not make assumptions and it is therefore vital that parents/carers approach the **Goldsborough Sicklinghall Federation** should they require support to meet their payment commitments. All discussions held and subsequent arrangements made are done so in the strictest of confidence.
2. The **Goldsborough Sicklinghall Federation** arrears procedure does not apply where voluntary contributions are requested to cover the cost of trips and visits. We will send an initial letter to ask whether parents/carers intend to contribute to the trip. When parents/carers tick that they will contribute, we will expect payment to be made prior to the trip taking place. However, up to two text message reminders will be sent where contributions are not received by the **Goldsborough Sicklinghall Federation** and visits may not go ahead if not enough contributions are received to cover the cost of the visit. The purpose of these text messages is to act as reminders and not to demand payment.
3. All payments required by the **Goldsborough Sicklinghall Federation** will be reminded via letter / email / Parent Pay / Parent Mail / text message as appropriate to the scenario. In all cases, a clear deadline for payment will be provided.
4. If, after the deadline, no payment or communication is received, a final reminder / phone call will be made by the School Administrator.
5. An initial letter will be sent with details of the debt and an explanation of what support is available. An extension of 5 working days within which payment should be received will be granted.

6. If, after this 5 day extension, no payment or communication is received, a second letter will be sent explaining that the North Yorkshire County Council's Welfare team will become involved. This is usually 5 working days following the date of the second letter.
7. If no payment or communication is received 5 working days after the second letter is sent, North Yorkshire County Council's Welfare team take over the process and the family is informed of this via a final letter.
8. As stated in North Yorkshire's Arrears Procedure, all letters will be sent via First Class Post and / or email and not via a child to ensure that correspondence is received.
9. All letters will include details of how to seek support from the **Goldsborough Sicklinghall Federation** if required.

The **Goldsborough Sicklinghall** Federation promotes an open and supportive dialogue with families. Where possible, we will always try and help families and may suggest a payment plan with agreed dates or an alternative solution to avoid the process escalating to North Yorkshire Welfare Team.

Communication regarding any financial difficulties is therefore essential from families. Please do not hesitate to contact the school office FAO: Headteacher regarding any payment issues you may have. School may be able to direct you to the right support to ensure that your own well-being is managed during these times.

Appendix 1 – Letter 1

Dear ,

According to our records, payment of £_____ is outstanding on your child's ParentPay account. Although a text message reminder has been sent, we do fully appreciate that this may be an oversight.

Details and/or a breakdown of this balance can be found below:

Please kindly pay the full balance within five working days of the date at the top of this letter. If you wish to discuss or have any questions in relation to his balance, please do not hesitate to contact the school office. Support may be available to you in certain circumstances and I would be happy to discuss these options at a mutually convenient time.

If you would like to further discuss this matter in the strictest of confidence, please do not hesitate to make an appointment to meet with me at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix 2 – Letter 2

Dear ,

According to our records, payment of £_____ remains outstanding on your child's ParentPay account. Although a text message reminder and a letter detailing the arrears have been sent, we have yet to receive payment or any further communication from you regarding this balance.

Details and/or a breakdown of this balance can be found below:

Please kindly pay the full balance within five working days of the date at the top of this letter or, alternatively, arrange to make an appointment to meet me, in confidence, at your earliest convenience. Support may be available to you in certain circumstances and I would be happy to discuss these options at a mutually convenient time.

Unfortunately, any balances that remain outstanding after this period must be dealt with by the North Yorkshire County Council Welfare Team.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix 3 – Letter 3 (Final Letter)

Dear ,

According to our records, payment of £XXX remains outstanding on your child's ParentPay account. Although a text message reminder and two letters detailing the arrears have been sent, we have yet to receive payment of this balance.

Details and/or a breakdown of this balance can be found below:

North Yorkshire County Council Welfare Team are now in charge of this process and will investigate the debt further. A member of their team will be in contact with you shortly.

Yours sincerely,