



POLICY 47

FEE DEBTORS POLICY

Policy reviewed by	Bursar
Governors' Committee	Finance & School
Date reviewed	Summer 2022
Approval / Oversight	Oversight
Next review date	Summer 2024

TRURO HIGH SCHOOL

FEE DEBTORS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** It is self-evident that the collection of fees is vital to the financial wellbeing of the School and it is important to have policies in place to deal with collection, arrears, non-payment and debt recovery. It is equally important and, more so with the implementation of legislation and the litigious society that we live in, that the School's terms and conditions related to the collection of fees and fees arrears are clearly laid down in the Parent Contract.
- 1.2** Truro High School requires that parents/carers pay the fees on or before the first day of term. In practice, most parents/carers will have paid their fees within the first fortnight. However, there will be a minority who will require constant and sustained chasing and it is important to have proper procedures to do this. It is also important that deadlines are set and adhered to so that the defaulting parent/carer is left in no doubt about their obligations and that the School intends to see that obligation discharged.

2. METHODS OF PAYING SCHOOL FEES

- 2.1** The School facilitates the following methods of paying School fees:
- A. **Cheque**
Payment may be made by cheque made payable to Truro High School.
 - B. **Internet Banking**
This is the School's preferred method for receiving fees. Details of the School's bank account can be found on each termly invoice.
 - C. **Credit Card**
Payment can be made by credit card. Payment can be made over the telephone by contacting the Accounts Office or in person at Reception.
 - D. **Monthly Payment**
The School is currently unable to accept monthly direct debit payments. Parents may wish to consider using third party finance providers, such as School Fee Plan, who offer monthly payment schemes.
 - E. **Fees in Advance**
Fees can be accepted in advance – a 1% discount can be offered for fees paid for a full academic year in advance of that academic year commencing. A further discount may be offered for parents who wish to pay three or more year's fees in advance, however, the School will continue to review fees on an annual basis and pass on any increases to advance fee payers – advance payers will therefore not be able 'fix' the fees by paying in advance.

3. METHODS OF CREDIT CONTROL

- 3.1 Graduated Response**
The key to effective credit control is ensuring there is a graduated response from gentle written reminders through meetings, to exclusion of the child and court orders.
- 3.2 Penalties**
2% interest may be added to balances not paid on the first day of term.
- 3.3 Exclusions Policy**
It is usual, when fees have not been paid for one term, that pupils should not be allowed to return at the start of the next term. Ultimately, it may be the only practical outcome is to recommend exclusion and referral to legal proceedings to recover the debt.

4. FEE DEBTORS PROCESS

- 4.1** Bearing in mind the above principles, the following Fee Debtors Process is to be followed in respect of Truro High School:

Stage	Nature of Document/Action	Action by	Timing
1	Email to parent reminding them to clear outstanding balance	Accounts Clerk	Between 2 and 7 days after new term
2	Second email to parent reminding them to clear outstanding balance, also informing them that no additional expenses such as trips, music lessons etc should be incurred.	Accounts Clerk	14-days after new term
3	First Letter demanding payment within 7-days and advising that a meeting with Head and Bursar may be required.	Bursar	7-days after second email
4	Final Letter, assuming no payment and non-compliant regarding meeting above - consideration now being given to exclusion of child after half term and matter to be put immediately in hands of solicitor.	Bursar	14-days after second email.
5	Local Solicitors (School's Debt Recovery Agent) – formal letter stating that proceedings will be issued if payment is not made	Local Solicitor	7-days after final letter

- 4.2** Clearly, it is hoped that the outstanding amount is actually cleared at the earliest possible stage; therefore negating the need to progress to the next step. Meticulous record keeping is essential and, at each stage, copies of letters and emails is kept in the pupil file and notes recorded of any phone calls that may have occurred.

5. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- 5.1** Notwithstanding the above procedure, it may become evident that within the late payers there will be parents with genuine financial difficulties. Where there is a genuine problem the award of a Bursary may be appropriate. Nevertheless, even in these circumstances it may not be in anyone's interest to allow a debt to accumulate with no immediate hope of recovery.