



DEBT COLLECTION PROCEDURE

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Introduction

In most cases, issues of late payment of fees by parents can be resolved without the need for the School to take formal steps.

This procedure sets out the steps that the School will take when a dialogue with parents does not result in the outstanding fees being paid and when the School wishes to take formal steps to recover the debt owed. In exceptional cases it may be necessary for the School to issue formal legal proceedings to recover unpaid school fees.

Payment plan

The School and the parents may reach an agreement about the payment of outstanding fees (e.g. a plan to pay by instalments) at any stage before formal proceedings commence. This procedure is designed to encourage informal resolution of any difficulties or disputes.

The procedure

The procedure sets out a number of steps:

Step one: first reminder (five days after the deadline)

Five days after the payment deadline, an email is sent to the parents asking for settlement. The reminder should contain the following information:

- the total amount of the debt with a detailed statement attached;
- a new deadline for payment (in 15 days' time); and
- an invitation to discuss a payment plan.

Step two: second reminder (20 days after the initial deadline)

If the payment has not arrived and a payment plan has not been agreed, a second email is sent to the parents, with a copy to the Finance Director. In addition, if the total debt exceeds CHF 2'000, either the Finance Officer or the Finance Director contacts the parents by telephone.

Step three: third reminder (35 days after the initial deadline)

If the School still has not received payment of the outstanding fees, the Head and the Finance Director should discuss the situation of the parent. Following the assessment of the situation, the Head and the Finance Director could decide to send a registered letter to the parent, signed by the Head and Finance Director. The letter should contain the following information:

- the total amount of the debt with a detailed statement attached;
- that for any debt above CHF 2'000, if the debt remains unsettled 90 days after the initial deadline the child/ren will be excluded from school and legal action will be taken;

Step four: exclusion of the child/ren and initiation of legal proceedings (90 days after the initial deadline)

Following a registered letter to the parents (with at least three days' notice) signed by the Head and Finance Director, the child/ren will be excluded from school. The letter will contain the following information:

- The date from which the child/ren are excluded;
- That the exclusion will remain in force until the outstanding balance is settled in full;

- That exclusion in these circumstances is not a disciplinary matter and that in accordance with Section 1.8.6 of our Terms and Conditions, the right to a governors' review does not normally arise;
- That our credit control company will contact the parents with notification of the opening of the legal procedure on behalf of the School;
- That following a period of 28 days' exclusion, the child/ren will be deemed withdrawn without notice and a term's fees in lieu of notice will be payable in accordance with Section 7 of the School's Terms and Conditions.

Step five: Following 28 days of exclusion, the child/ren is/are deemed withdrawn from the School).

At least three days in advance, a registered letter, signed by the Head and Finance Director, is sent to the parents. The letter will contain the following information:

- The date from which the child/ren will be deemed withdrawn;
- That a letter from the Head will be sent to the Geneva Department of Education, informing them that the child/ren is/are no longer registered at the school;
- A reminder of the parents' legal obligation to educate their child/ren at school or at home.

References

Constitution de la République et canton de Genève, Art. 194 Formation obligatoire

https://www.ge.ch/legislation/rsg/f/s/rsg_a2_00.html

Loi sur l'instruction publique, Art. 37 Obligation d'instruction

https://www.ge.ch/legislation/rsg/f/s/rsg_C1_10.html