

School Meals Policy



Mission Statement

Life is an adventure, embrace it
Life is a challenge, meet it
Life is an opportunity, capture it

Aim

In the context of Christian belief and practice we aim to:

- Make available a healthy nutritious daily meal for children
- Outline the school's procedures regarding school meals
- Ensure the smooth, efficient and cost effective operation of the school dinner system.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. School meals are available to pupils at a cost of £2.10 per day or at no cost to those in receipt of a free meal entitlement.
- 1.2. School meals are prepared by *Food and More*, who are a leading provider of contract catering and support services to the education sector.
- 1.3. Food and More is committed to helping to develop great eating habits in young people and by providing nutritious, tasty and exciting dishes created by a dedicated development team, freshly prepared onsite by catering staff.
- 1.4. An important way of doing this is by offering variety, adapting 'grown up' dishes to children's tastes and encouraging children to try something new. Food and More also aim to make mealtimes at school enjoyable by celebrating special days at school with a festive menu. Examples are important dates in the calendar such as Christmas but menus, which link to the curriculum, are also offered, such as European Week.
- 1.5. Food and More are responsible for ensuring all meals are nutritionally balanced over the course of a 4 week cycle.
- 1.6. Children can sit down together and enjoy their meal whilst at the same time developing social skills of eating together that are so important in later life.
- 1.7. Children in the Foundation Stage will eat with their teacher or class teaching assistant.
- 1.8. A well fed and happy child is more likely to be receptive to participating in the afternoon's activities.

2. Paying for School Meals

- 2.1. Parents are encouraged to pay for school meals in advance using Parent Pay, an online dinner money system.
- 2.2. If payment is made direct to school, meals can be paid for in advance on a weekly, monthly or half-termly basis.

- 2.3. Occasional meals can be paid for in cash or by cheque. Payments must be sent to the school office in a sealed envelope with the name of your child, class and the amount enclosed. Cheques should be made payable to *Oxfordshire County Council*.
- 2.4. The school is unable to give change to parents. Any cash received will be credited against the child's account.

3. Parent Pay – On-line Dinner Money System

- 3.1. The school uses an electronic dinner money system run by Parent Pay and online payments are encouraged. The minimum payment amount is £10.
- 3.2. Parents are provided with a unique user name and password for secure online payments.

4. Non-payment

- 4.1. The school has no legal obligation to provide each child with a hot meal, just to ensure that a hot meal is available to them. As parents, it is your duty to ensure your child is provided with the right nutritional requirements throughout the day.
- 4.2. The school does not offer a credit facility and the school cannot tolerate debt amounting to more than one week's payment. This means that money which should be spent on children's education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents.
- 4.3. If a parent repeatedly fails to provide a packed lunch, or sufficient monies to cover the cost of school meals, there may be a referral to Social Services as this has an effect on a pupil's welfare.

A child without payment or packed lunch

- 4.4. Should a child arrive at school without payment or a packed lunch, the school will telephone home in the first instance to establish if alternative arrangements have been made.
- 4.5. If your child has taken a school meal which has not been paid for, you will be sent a reminder detailing how much you owe. Payment must be made immediately and can be sent in with your child. If payment is not received by the end of the same week, a further letter will be sent detailing the consequences of non-payment and a final date by which payment must be made.
- 4.6. If the matter remains unresolved, you will be sent a third and final letter requesting payment and detailing the school's next course of action.
- 4.7. The school will in exceptional circumstances postpone the refusal to provide meals where parents have advised the school of their financial situation and school is satisfied that the funding will be forthcoming.

Non-payment of school meals procedure

- 4.8. Payments will be checked every Friday. If you owe more than £9.50, the school will send a reminder letter requesting payment within the next 5 school days.
- 4.9. If payment is not received, or no satisfactory explanation or solution is provided, then the school will not be able to provide a meal for your child/ren and a further letter will be sent detailing the consequences of non-payment and a final date by which payment must be made.
- 4.10. Outstanding debt will be brought to the attention of the school governors.
- 4.11. The school will work closely with parents in working out a form of payment plan to help resolve the situation if requested by the parent. However, where no attempt is made to clear the debt it will follow the procedure of the school's Debt Management Policy.
- 4.12. If the debt remains after 4 weeks, the school will place the debt on the County Council debt recovery list and legal action is likely to be taken if the debt remains outstanding.

5. Free School Meals

- 5.1. If you think your child is entitled to free school meals, please speak in confidence to either the Headteacher or someone in the school office.
- 5.2. Before claiming free school meals for their child, parents must ensure that they provide the school office with the following details: their full name, national insurance number and date of birth, and wait for confirmation from the Local Authority.
- 5.3. Failure to follow this process may result in a parents being charged for the meals they have ordered.
- 5.4. In cases of a new arrival to the school, or a change in circumstances, parents should speak to the Headteacher or school office immediately to ensure that meals can be provided straight away if there is an entitlement.

6. Universal Infant Free School Meals

- 6.1. All children in Key Stage 1 (reception, year 1 and year 2) in state-funded schools in England are entitled to receive a free school lunch, through the introduction of the government's Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) policy.

7. Monitoring and Review

The School Administrator will monitor payments:

Weekly - Non-payment reminders will be sent.