

Emersons Green Primary School



Policy on School Meals

Signed (Chair):	Name: Mike Beard	Date: September 2019
Signed (Head):	Name: Karl Hemmings	Date: September 2019
Next Review: October 2022		

SCHOOL MEALS POLICY

Aims:

- To outline the school's procedures regarding school meals.
- To work with parents to provide a flexible approach to the lunchtime nutritional needs of our pupils.
- To ensure the smooth, efficient and cost effective operation of the school dinner system.
- To clarify the roles and responsibilities of school staff, parents and pupils.
- To present a workable, fair mechanism for the collection of school dinner money.

Charges:

School meals are available to pupils at a cost of £2.30 per day or at no cost to those in receipt of a free meal entitlement.

Selecting meals:

Parents are required to log on to Parentpay and select their child's meals. Meals need to be selected before 8.00am, this includes selecting packed lunch, this can be done up to three weeks in advance. If a child has special dietary requirements it is possible to make the menus for those requirements available online for parents to select from – parents need to make this request at the school office.

Paying for School Meals:

- The payment for meals is required in advance and is taken at the time of booking.
- Payments must be made via Parentpay.
- If a child's entitlement to free school dinners has expired, the parent/carer must provide a packed lunch or make payment via Parentpay.

If payment has not been made:

If a child has taken a school meal which has not been paid for the parent/carer will be sent a text on a weekly basis. Payment must be made immediately and can be paid via Parentpay.

If payment is not received by Friday the following week a further text and follow up letter will be emailed out detailing the consequences of non-payment and a date by which payment must be made (**Appendix 1**).

If payment is not received by Friday the following week a further text and follow up letter will be emailed out detailing the consequences of non-payment and a final date by which payment must be made (**Appendix 2**).

If the matter remains unresolved, a 3rd and final letter requesting payment and detailing the school's next course of action will be sent. (**Appendix 3**)

The school cannot allow the debt to amount to more than one week's payment.

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 and it is your legal responsibility to make lunch provision for your child. The school is not obliged to provide a school dinner where payment is not forthcoming or where authorisation for free school meals has not been received and you will be asked to provide your child with a packed lunch until the debt is cleared. We will therefore act promptly to address such issues at an early stage, in order to prevent arrears of dinner monies from accumulating to a point beyond parents means to settle.

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.

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.

Information regarding free school meals is available from the School Office and our website (www.emersonsgreenprimary.co.uk)

APPENDIX 1

1st Reminder

Parent or career of

Our records show that you have not paid dinner money for [CHILD'S NAME].

As at [DATE] your account is showing a debt of £-

Please arrange for this money to be paid immediately. Once the debt is cleared please ensure the account is always in credit. Please make payment via Parentpay. If you have any difficulties in accessing your child's account on Parentpay, please contact the school office immediately for assistance.

The cost of a school meal is £2.30 per day.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely

Karl Hemmings
Headteacher

APPENDIX 2

2nd Reminder

Parent or carer of

Our records show that you have not paid dinner money for [CHILD'S NAME] despite a previous written reminder. As at [DATE] your account is showing a debt of £-

Please arrange for this money to be paid immediately by Parentpay

The cost of a school meal is £2.30

Since non-payment for school meals affects the quality of service we offer to the children, we need to ensure that all payments are up-to-date and I am afraid that if the debt is not cleared by the end of this week it will not be possible to provide your child with a school meal. You will then need to make your own arrangements for your child's lunch.

The school reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to recover the debt and to inform social services of our concerns that you are not providing a meal for your child at lunch time if dinners continue to be ordered without the debt being cleared.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely

Karl Hemmings
Headteacher

Appendix 3

3rd and final reminder

Parent or carer of

Our records show that despite previous reminders you have not paid dinner money for [CHILD'S NAME] for some considerable time now and as at today's date your account is showing a debt of £-

In accordance with our School Meal's Policy, your child will not be provided with school dinners as of [DATE] until the debt is settled and we therefore require you to send [CHILD'S NAME] into school with a packed lunch from [DATE].

Please ensure you have made sufficient provision for your child's lunch as it is your legal responsibility.

Once the debt has been cleared your child is welcome to resume school meals with payment in advance.

I would be grateful if you could please contact me to discuss your outstanding debt, together with a payment plan as to how this debt will be settled. Failure to do so will result in the activation of the school's debt management recovery procedure.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Karl Hemmings
Headteacher