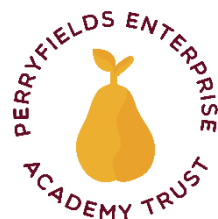


Perryfields Junior School

School Meals Debt Policy



Adapted From:	Perryfields Junior School
Reviewed date:	September 2021
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This edition: September 2021

SUMMARY OF CHANGES	
Section	Change
Section 3	Cost of school meal amended. Option to pay for meals with cash and cheque removed.
Section 5	Remove Essex County Council as contact for Free School Meals advice and application. The school now uses LGfL.

Perryfields Junior School

School Meals Debt Policy

1. Aims

- To outline and clarify the school's procedures regarding school meals.
- To ensure the smooth, efficient and cost-effective operation of the school dinner system.
- To clarify roles and responsibilities of staff, parents/carers and pupils.
- To present a workable and fair mechanism for the collection of school dinner money.

2. Rationale

We hope that by implementing this debt policy we are able to help parents manage school dinner money payments and ensure that all money that is for children's learning is available for that purpose.

3. Payment for School Meals

The cost of a school meal as at September 2021 is £2.20 per day (£11 per week) and school dinners can be ordered in advance or on the day.

School meals are payable in advance and are paid online (through Tucasi ScoPay).

If pupils are absent due to illness, their dinner money is credited for the following week.

Refunds on outstanding balances may only be given for credits at the end of Year 6 or if a child is leaving to attend another school. Requests for refunds must be made to the school office.

If a pupil forgets their packed lunch and is given a school meal, parents must pay for that meal the following morning.

4. If payment is not received

If school meal debts are incurred, the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education is being used to pay for debts incurred by parents.

If a pupil has taken a school meal that has not been paid for, parents will be sent a reminder on Friday detailing how much they owe. Payment must be made immediately.

If payment is not received, a letter will be sent home advising parents that the school will provide no more meals for their child until the debt has been cleared and that they will have to provide a packed lunch for their child.

If a pupil attends school with no packed lunch after a letter has been sent home refusing further school meals, the parents will be called after morning registration to remind them that they need to bring a packed lunch in for their child. If a parent fails to bring in a packed lunch, provision will be made for the pupil and the matter will be referred to the school's Safeguarding Officer. No child will ever not be provided with a lunch.

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. We will therefore act promptly to address such issues at an early stage in order to prevent arrears of dinner money from accumulating to a point beyond parents' means to settle.

The school will work closely with parents to work out a form of payment plan to help resolve the situation. This relies on parents contacting the school office for help.

If a parent repeatedly fails to provide a packed lunch, or sufficient monies to cover the cost of a school meal there may be a referral to Social Services as this has a negative impact on a pupil's welfare.

5. Free School Meals

Parents and Carers who are in receipt of certain benefits, may be entitled to 'Free School Meals'. These benefits include:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (not Working Tax Credit)
- Pension Credit Guarantee and to be in receipt of Child Tax Credit above the basic family element

Help and information on claiming free school meals is available from the school office. All applications for free school meals are treated with the strictest confidence.