

Calow Church of England (V.C.) Primary School Dinner Money Income Administration Policy

Payment for School Meals

- The cost of a school meal is currently £2.10 per day (£10.50 per week).
- This is payable in advance.
- Parents/Guardians are expected to pay on Monday morning each week or may pay for longer periods in advance if more convenient.
- Parents may pay by cash or cheque payable to Derbyshire County Council, in an envelope clearly labelled with the child's name.
- If children are absent, their dinner money is credited for the following week.
- Refunds may only be given for credits at the end of a term, or if a child is leaving this school to attend another.
- If a child forgets their packed lunch and is given a school meal, parents/guardians must pay for that meal on the same day or the following morning at the latest (except for children in receipt of Free School Meals).

Free School Meals

Children may be entitled to free school meals if their parents/carers receive any of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals.

If children are eligible for free school meals, they will remain eligible until they finish the phase of schooling (primary or secondary) they are in on 31 March 2022.

Infant free school meals in England

All children in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are automatically eligible for free school meals. Parents/Carers are still encouraged to notify the school if they are in receipt of any of the benefits listed above, as the school may receive extra funding as a result.

Application forms are available from the School office, or parents/carers can apply directly through the free school meals section of the DCC website.

Children who have a packed lunch but who are entitled to Free School meals must notify the school office if changing from one to another.

All applications for Free School Meals are treated with the strictest confidence.

Debt Policy

- As from September 2013 the School has adhered to a minimising debt approach relating to school meals.
- Parents/Carers are strongly encouraged to pay for meals in advance.
- We request that all parents give this policy their full support. If debts are incurred, the school has to pay for the meals eaten. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education has to be used for debts incurred by parents. No parent would take their child to a restaurant and expect them to be given food without paying – the same applies to this School.
- Parents/Carers in arrears by more than a week will be contacted with a reminder. Two weeks in arrears will result in a further reminder and a request for immediate payment. The school will write to parents/carers who are three weeks in arrears and inform them that we will no longer provide lunches until the debt is settled in full and payment for future meals made in advance.
- If a debt is not cleared after three weeks, parents/carers must provide a packed lunch until full payment is received. Where this does not happen, the child will be fed at school, but this amounts to a failure to meet the child's basic needs, so a referral to Social Services will be considered.
- If a reasonable arrangement to clear a debt cannot be made, the School reserves the right to commence legal proceedings to secure payment.
- We hope that by implementing this debt policy we are able to help parents manage school dinner money better and ensure that all money that is intended for children's learning is available for that purpose.
- Where staff members are charged for a school lunch, they are also expected to pay in advance and will not be allowed to accumulate debt.

Policy Review: October 2018