

Date Created:

Rodney House School



Dinner Money Policy

Reviewed: January 2018

Signed by Governor:

Rationale

Rodney House School Dinner Money Policy has been adopted to ensure a consistent and fair approach to debt incurred by parents/carers whose children take school dinners.

Provision of School Meals

Parents of pupils at Rodney House have the choice of paying for a school lunch for their child or providing a healthy packed lunch. Manchester Fayre is commissioned by the school to provide a healthy menu suitable for the needs of the children. All school meals are prepared on the premises and meet the government guidelines regarding the provision of healthy school meals.

Notification of a change in meal arrangement from school dinner to packed lunch or vice versa must be given verbally or in writing to the school office, two weeks in advance.

Free School Meals

Free school meals are available to those who are entitled to certain benefits. To check free school meal eligibility, parents can speak to a member of staff in the school office or apply online via the Manchester City Council (MCC) website.

It is important that eligible families apply for free school meals as this attracts pupil premium funding to the school. Parents will be encouraged to apply if they meet the eligibility criteria.

If a child's entitlement to free school meals expires or the parent's/carer's personal circumstances change, the parent/carer must inform the school and provide a packed lunch or send payment in advance for a school dinner.

Children in Reception to Year 2 are automatically entitled to a Universal Infant Free School Meal (UIFSM). Parents are not required to apply for a UIFSM, however if the family are in receipt of benefits, they will be encouraged to apply for free school meals via MCC. This will attract additional pupil premium funding to the school.

Payment of School Meals

School meals are currently available to children at a cost of £2.30 per day (academic year 18/19). Any revision to the price of meals will be notified to parents/carers during the term prior to the new charge taking effect. The cost will usually increase from September each year. Payment is to be made weekly in advance by cash or cheque. Parents may pay a half-term or term in advance if they wish.

Cash is paid to the school office or sent to school in a sealed envelope clearly marked with the child's name, class and amount enclosed. Cheques are payable to Rodney House School. A receipt is issued for all monies received.

Parents can pay dinner money directly into the school bank account. Parents can obtain bank details from the School Business Manager.

If a child is absent their dinner money will be credited for the following week.

If a child forgets their packed lunch and is given a school meal, the parent must pay on the same or following day unless they are entitled to free school meals or a UIFSM.

Management of School Meal Debt

To ensure that the school's budget is not adversely affected by the cost of school meal debt, the school has a zero tolerance approach. In the event of a parent failing to pay in advance, the following steps will be taken.

1. If advance payment is not received on the Monday (or the first day for part time pupils), the parent will be contacted by the Finance Administrator by telephone or face to face on the Thursday of the same week. Payment will be expected by the Friday at the latest.
2. If payment is not received by the following Monday (or the first day for part time pupils), a letter will be sent home stating the amount of debt and requesting payment.
3. If the debt remains outstanding for a period of 2 weeks, the School Business Manager will contact the parent by telephone to discuss the debt and agree a payment plan if there is financial difficulty. Parents will be requested to send their child to school with a packed lunch to avoid the debt increasing.
4. If a packed lunch is not provided, the child continues to require a meal and no payment is made, the Headteacher will contact the parent directly and request they come in to school and settle the full outstanding amount. Failure to provide a packed lunch may result in a call to Children's Services.
5. If the outstanding amount remains unpaid, the Governing Body will take action to recover the debt. A final letter will be sent to parents informing them that the school reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to secure payment.

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