

# Castle Hills Primary School



## Dinner Money Policy

Revision	Status	Purpose	Originated	Checked	Authorised	Date
V.01	Draft	New Document	RG	SMcB	Governors	11/6/19
V1	Issued	Updated following initial review	RG	SMcB	Governors	11/6/19

# Castle Hills Primary School

## Dinner Money Policy

### Introduction

This policy sets out the rules and procedures for the payment and collection of dinner money.

### Payment for School Meals

- This is payable in advance
- Parents/Carers are expected to pay for the full week by 11:00am on Monday morning each week. You may pay for longer periods of up to a term in advance if this is more convenient
- Payment is to be made on Parent Pay or may in exceptional circumstances be paid in cash at the school office (this should be in a clearly labelled envelope)
- If children are absent, their dinner money will be credited on Parent Pay once the registers have been checked
- Refunds may only be given, for credits at the end of a term, if your child is leaving school or if your child switches from school meals to packed lunches
- If a child forgets their packed lunch the office will make every attempt to contact you to bring it in or get your approval to ask the kitchen to provide them with a meal. If this is the case then parents/carers must pay for that meal on the same day (except for children in receipt of free school meals)
- The office must be given one weeks notification (ideally in writing) of any changes in meal arrangements
- The cut off time for ordering a school meal is 10:00am. If you know your child is going to be late due to an appointment then prior arrangements can be made with the school office for a meal to be pre-ordered
- If your child goes home ill after 10:30am you will still be charged for the school meal as it will have been prepared

### Free School Meals

- From September 2014 all pupils in Reception, year 1 and year 2 are entitled to free school meals under the government **Universal infant free school meals** scheme.
- Parents/Carers who are in receipt of some benefits may be entitled to free school meals. These benefits include:
  - Universal Credit – If you apply on or after 1 April 2018, your annual net earned income must be no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to 3 of your most recent assessment periods.
  - Income Support
  - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
  - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
  - Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit and your annual income is below £16,190 (as worked out by HM Revenue & Customs)
  - Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
  - Support under part VI of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999
  - Parents receiving Working Tax Credit for four weeks after their employment finishes are entitled to free school meals during that period. This also applies to parents who start working less than 16 hours per week

**Transitional Protection is introduced so that;**

- From 1 April 2018, all existing free school meal claimants will continue to receive free school meals whilst Universal Credit is rolled out. This will apply even if their earnings rise above the new threshold during that time
- In addition, any child gaining eligibility for free school meals after 1 April 2018 will be protected against losing free school meals during the Universal Credit rollout period.
- Once Universal Credit is fully rolled out, any existing claimants that no longer meet the above eligibility criteria at that point will continue to receive free school meals until the end of their current phase of education (i.e. primary or secondary)

Transitional Protection applies to all children whether eligible through legacy benefits or Universal Credit.

Transitional Protections are put in place on an individual child basis, not on a family basis.

This means that younger siblings will not become entitled to free school meals simply because their older sibling is in receipt of transitional protection. The younger child must meet the eligibility criteria at the time the application is made to become eligible for free school meals.

The Universal Credit rollout is currently expected to complete in March 2022.

**You are NOT entitled to free school meals if:**

- You receive Working Tax Credit except where the 'four week run-on' applies as described above

Pupils are also entitled to claim free school meals in their own right if they are in receipt of any of the above benefits.

**Applying for free school meals**

Even if your child does not want free school meals, you should still make a request. This is because you may be entitled to other benefits for your child, for example, free school milk for children under seven, or help towards board and lodging charges for school trips.

**Online application**

If you meet the criteria, an online request, normally by the parent of guardian of the child, has to be made before the council can provide free school meals.

Apply for free school meals on [www.doncaster.gov.uk/doitonline/free-school-meals](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/doitonline/free-school-meals)

Please note: you will have to pay for any school meals your child has before your application is received.

**Universal infant free school meals**

Although infant children will automatically receive a free meal, families who are in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits above should complete an online application so we can check if school is entitled to receive the Pupil Premium for your child.

The Pupil Premium is a grant provided by the government for every child that has the right to a free school meal. For 2019-20 the Pupil Premium is;

- £1,320 per eligible child from reception to Year 6

The money is used to support individual pupils and the whole school community.

Even if you don't want your child to receive a free school meal we would ask that you still apply, so that Castle Hills Primary School can receive as much funding as possible.

- Entitlement of Free School meals cannot start until the school has been notified by the Local authority of entitlement

- Parents who have children who are entitled to free school meals but choose to provide their child with a packed lunch must notify the office when they are changing from one to other.

#### **Debt Policy**

- From September 2014 the school will adopt a strict NO DEBT policy relating to school meals
- Children will not be provided with a school lunch unless it is paid for in advance (except for those children entitled to free school meals)
- If a parent/carer genuinely forgets to pay, on the first occasion school may grant an exception and allow them to pay by the following day but all future meals must be paid for in advance before any meal is provided
- All parents will be required to sign off acceptance of this policy in the form of a letter (see Appendix A)
- If a debt is not cleared, parents /carers must either provide a packed lunch or take their child home for lunch. In a case when a debt payment is not received, nor a packed lunch provided, school will telephone the parent/carer asking them to come to school with the money immediately, provide sandwiches before lunch, or take their child home for lunch.
- If a parent/carer is not carrying out their responsibility of care, by not providing food for their child at lunchtime, then the matter should be referred to the headteacher where consideration will be taken to involve Social Services
- If a reasonable arrangement to clear a debt cannot be made, the school reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to secure payment

## **Dinner Money Policy – including Dinner Arrangements**

### **Payment for school meals**

- The cost of a school meal is currently £2.50 per day, £12.50 per week
- This is payable in advance
- Parents/Carers are expected to pay for the full week by 11:00am on Monday morning each week or may pay for longer periods up to a term in advance if more convenient
- Parents should make payment on Parent Pay or in exceptional circumstances be paid in cash at the school office (this should be in a clearly labelled envelope)
- If children are absent, their dinner money will be credited on Parent Pay once the registers have been checked and carried forward to the following week
- Refunds may only be given, for credits at the end of a term, if your child is leaving school to attend another or if your child switches from school meals to packed lunches
- If a child forgets their packed lunch and is given a school meal, parents/carers 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)
- The office must be given one weeks notification (ideally in writing) of any changes in meal arrangements
- The cut off time for ordering a school meal is 10:00am. If you know your child is going to be late due to an appointment then prior arrangements can be made with the school office for a meal to be pre-ordered
- If your child goes home ill after 10:30am you will still be charged for the school meal as it will have been prepared

### **Free School Meals**

- From September 2014 all pupils in Reception, year 1 and year 2 are entitled to free school meals under the government **Universal infant free school meals** scheme.
- Parents/Carers who are in receipt of some benefits may be entitled to free school meals. These benefits include:
  - Universal Credit – If you apply on or after 1 April 2018, your annual net earned income must be no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to 3 of your most recent assessment periods.
  - Income Support
  - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
  - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
  - Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit and your annual income is below £16,190 (as worked out by HM Revenue & Customs)
  - Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
  - Support under part VI of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999
  - Parents receiving Working Tax Credit for four weeks after their employment finishes are entitled to free school meals during that period. This also applies to parents who start working less than 16 hours per week

If you think you may be entitled to free school meals please contact Doncaster Council on 01302 735336 or apply online at

[www.doncaster.gov.uk/doitonline/free-school-meals](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/doitonline/free-school-meals)

Please note –

- School is unable to provide a free school meal until your application has been processed and we have been notified by D.M.B.C. of your entitlement
- 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

### Debt Policy

- As from September 2014 the school will adopt a strict NO DEBT policy relating to school meals
- Children will not be provided with a school lunch unless it is paid for in advance (except for those children entitled to free school meals)
- If a parent/carer genuinely forgets to pay, the school may grant an exception and allow them to pay the following day, but all future meals must be paid for in advance before any meal is provided
- We request that all parents give this policy their full support. If debts are incurred, 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. Please consider – no-one could take a child to a restaurant and expect them to be given food without paying – the same applies to this school
- If a debt is not cleared, parents/carers must either provide a packed lunch or take their child home for lunch. In a case when a debt payment is not received, nor a packed lunch provided, school will telephone the parent/carer asking them to come to school with the money immediately, provide sandwiches before lunch, or take their child home for lunch
- If a parent/carer is not carrying out their responsibility of care by not providing food for their child at lunchtime, Social Services may be informed.
- If a reasonable arrangement to clear debt cannot be made, the school reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to secure payment
- We hope that implementing this debt policy we are able to help parents manage school dinner money better and ensure that all money provided for children's education is used for that purpose

Please note – school will not be able to provide a child with a school dinner unless this policy has been signed. Please retain this policy for your information (it will be reviewed annually) and complete the reply slip below returning it to the school office by 18<sup>th</sup> July 2019



Castle Hills Primary School  
Dinner Money Policy and Dinner Arrangements

Pupil's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

I confirm that my child's lunch arrangements are:

School Meal       Free School Meal       Packed Lunch   
Please tick as necessary

***I have read and agree to adhere to Castle Hills Primary School Dinner Policy***

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Carer's name \_\_\_\_\_