



St Mary's C.E. Primary School Dinner Money Policy



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1 Key Information

- 1.1 All parents are provided with a copy of this dinner money policy when their child joins the school.
- 1.2 This policy is available on the school website.
- 1.3 All school lunches must be paid for in advance unless an agreed arrangement is made with the Administrator.
- 1.4 Parents who do not want their child/ren to have a school lunch should provide a healthy packed lunch instead.
- 1.5 If a parent wishes their child/ren change from school meals to packed lunches or vice versa they need to give the school at least ONE WEEKS' notice.
- 1.6 Taking meals without paying for them is theft and deprives all children of learning materials that cannot then be bought.
- 1.7 The persons responsible for dealing with dinner money is: Miss Naomi Alveranga and Mrs Carol Nevin – Telephone number is: 0161 226 1773

2 Do you qualify for Free School Meals?

To get free school meals from the Benefits Service:

- 2.1 Your child/ren must **live** in Manchester, even if s/he/they go to school in another area, and
 - 2.1.1 be aged up to 16, or over 16 and attending full-time at a school with a sixth form; or
 - 2.1.2 attend nursery part-time, providing their session crosses lunchtime (they attend mid-morning to mid-afternoon). It is up to the school to decide whether a nursery child's hours of attendance make them eligible.
- 2.2 You must be responsible for that child, for example, receiving Child Benefit for them. You must also get:
 - 2.2.1 Income Support; or
 - 2.2.2 Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance; or
 - 2.2.3 Income-related Employment Support Allowance; or
 - 2.2.4 Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; or
 - 2.2.5 the guaranteed part of Pension Credit; or
 - 2.2.16 Child Tax Credit (CTC) (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190); or
 - 2.2.7 A Working Tax Credit 'run-on' payment for four weeks after stopping work or reducing working hours to under 16 hours a week; or
 - 2.2.8 Universal Credit.



3 Payments

School meals are payable in advance each Monday. The current payment, in the 2016-2017 academic year is £2.20 each day which is £11.00 per week. The payment needs to be paid in cash at the school office. The school will issue a receipt for all payments.

4 Changing from meals to sandwiches

If you wish to change your child's meal arrangements, please let the school office know as soon as possible. School meals are ordered from the kitchen a week in advance and we have to change the order. It would be appreciated if you could give **ONE WEEKS NOTICE** of any change. **To change on a daily basis is not acceptable.**

5 Food Allergies

If your child has an allergy to certain foods we need to be aware of this so that we can notify the school kitchen and mid day staff. If you have any concerns about your child regarding the lunchtime we will gladly pass those on to the Senior Lunchtime Organisers and the Cook when you notify the school office.

6 Dealing with payment arrears

At St Mary's School we do not allow dinner money to go into arrears unless an agreed arrangement has been made. If your child/ren dinner money goes into arrears, here are the procedures the school follows. Remember taking meals without paying for them is theft and deprives children of much needed learning materials. We understand that parents and carers sometimes get into financial difficulties and are not able to pay for school meals at the usual time. If you are in this position, it is always best that you contact the school and discuss the matter as soon as possible and not let the matter be ignored.

Step 1

Your child's account goes into debt.

This is what the school checks before contacting you:

- Is this a Free School Meal (FSM) child?
- Are dates correct?



- Is there a possibility that payments have not been credited?
- Does this parent normally pay on time; is this apparently just a one off?

Action 1: Gentle debt reminder (See Appendix 1)

A letter is sent or a telephone call is made to you reminding you that you have an outstanding debt for school meals.

Step 2

Your child comes to school again without the debt being paid or a packed lunch

This is what the school checks before contacting you:

- Is this a FSM child?
- Are dates correct?
- Is there a possibility that payments have not been credited?
- Has this parent/carer made contact?

Action 2: Personal contact

The administrator will phone you to ask you either to bring money or sandwiches to school before lunchtime or arrange to take you child home at lunchtime.

Step 3

You do not comply with any of these options.

This is what the school checks before contacting you:

- Have all the previous steps been followed?
- Is this a FSM child, are dates correct?
- Is there a possibility that payments have not been credited?
- Has this parent made contact with anyone at the school about anything at all?

Action 3: Debt letter (see Appendix 2)

A letter will be sent from the Headteacher asking you to come into school to discuss the issue.



Step 4

If you do not comply with any of these options,

- Have all the previous step been followed and recorded?
- Is this child an FSM child,?
- Are dates correct?
- Is there a possibility that payments have not been credited?
- Has this parent made contact with anyone at the school about this or any other matter?

Action 4: Involve outside agencies

- The details are brought to the attention of the Governing Body (Chair of Governors initially).
- A further letter (and a similar text or email) is sent by the Headteacher you informing you of the next stage
- Governing Body is asked to approve the next stage.
- The supply of meals may be suspended and details of the debt may be passed on to the Local Authority who may consider undertaking debt collection proceedings.
- The Governing Body may consider referring the matter to Social Services since you appear not to be carrying out properly the responsibility of care by not providing food for your child at lunchtime.



Appendix 1: Reminder letter

Date:

Dear Parent / Carer

It has come to our attention that you owe the school some money for your child's school meals.

Total including this week is £n.nn.

Please can you contact the office to discuss this matter?

Thank you

name

School Meals Administrator



Appendix 2: Letter from the Headteacher

Date:

Dear Parent / Carer

Re: Outstanding Payments for School Meals

Mr/Ms/Mrs/Miss name, the School Meals Administrator has contacted you on numerous occasions recently to let you know you that you owe some money for your child's school dinners.

At the time of writing, the arrears have still not been paid and this is unacceptable.

I should be grateful if you would bring your child to school tomorrow with a packed lunch.

It will be necessary for a meeting to be arranged to discuss this matter.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher