Edenfield C of E Primary School



SCHOOL MEAL ARRANGEMENTS PAYMENT & DEBT POLICY 2022 - 2023

Presented by	Leadership Committee
Date approved by Governors	March 2020
Reviewed	May 2022
Review Date	May 2023

Payment for School Meals

- School meals must be paid for in advance.
- Parents/carers are reminded of the cost of school meals at the beginning of each term on the school newsletter.
- Parents/carers are expected to pay on Monday morning each week or may pay for longer periods up to a term in advance if more convenient.
- Parents may pay by cash or cheque payable to Lancashire County Council, in a labelled envelope.
- If children are absent and parents notify school before 10am, their dinner money is credited for the following week.
- If a child leaves school after 10am and a school meal has been ordered for them, then this is still payable.
- If a child forgets their packed lunch and is given a school meal, parents/carers must pay for that meal the following day (except for children in receipt of Free School Meals).
- Where a child's dinner money account is in credit, refunds will only be given at the end of each term and only in the following circumstances:

  - where a child is leaving our school to attend another

  - where parents request a refund and have credits totalling over £10

Late Payments

- If parents/carers fail to make payment in advance, a gentle reminder letter will sent home in the first instance, requesting immediate payment.
- Should payment not be received within 7 days of this letter, a further letter will be sent home, requesting payment by a specified date. Should payment not be received by the specified date, the Headteacher may issue a cessation of service letter. (The Headteacher will assess each case individually, taking into consideration all the circumstances).
- Where parents/carers have communicated that they are having difficulty paying the debt, the school will work with the parent/carer to agree a suitable repayment period.
- Once a cessation of service letter has been issued, children will not have the option of transferring back to school meals until the debt has been cleared.
- If the debt has been cleared, the child will be allowed to transfer back to meals, however, meals will only be provided if paid for in advance. If payment is not received in advance then the meal service will cease immediately.

- Once a cessation of service letter has been issued, parents/carers must either provide a packed lunch or take the child home for lunch. If a debt payment is not received, and a packed lunch has not been provided, the Headteacher/Bursar will telephone the parent or carer asking them to come to school with the money immediately, provide sandwiches or take the child home for lunch.

- Should the debt fail to be cleared within a satisfactory period (determined by school), then the school reserves the right to pass the debt to LCC's debt recovery team for further action.

Free School Meals

- Parents/carers of junior children (Year 3, 4 & 5) who are in receipt of certain benefits, may be entitled to Free School Meals.

- Parents should contact the Area Education Office to determine whether they are eligible.

- Parents/carers of infant children (Reception, Year 1 & Year 2) are currently entitled to free school meals due to the universal free school meals for infants government initiative.

- Please be aware that all applications for Free School Meals are treated with the strictest confidence.

- In the event of partial school closures, children who are in receipt of certain benefits and therefore eligible for free school meals may be issued with food parcels, or vouchers (determined by LCC). These only applies if the child remains at home, children attending school will be provided with a free school meal as normal.

Changes to School Meal Arrangements

- Changes to meal arrangements can only be made at the beginning of every half-term and at least two weeks' notice must be given. In exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher may allow a child to change outside these periods. Should a pupil wish to change meal arrangements, parents should complete a 'meal changes form' obtainable from the school office.

- Once a commitment is made to a school meal, parents will be liable to pay for the complete half-term, unless otherwise agreed by the Headteacher.