



WELLESLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

School Meals Policy

Issue No: 5
Date: July 2023

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School Meals

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Change Record Sheet

Issue No	Date	Summary of Change	Amended by:
1	May 2016	Policy Adopted	Kathryn Jones
2	March 2020	Policy Reviewed	Heather Small
3	July 2020	Change to cashless	Kathryn Jones
4	May 2023	Policy Reviewed – no change	Kathryn Jones
5	July 2023	Update meal charge effective from September 2023	Kathryn Jones

Summary

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

Policy Written: May 2016

Introduction

This policy has been compiled in recognition of the difficulties placed on schools in balancing the social welfare of pupils with the responsibility of managing the School Budget. From 1st April 2016 Wellesley Primary School has been liable for its own school meals' income and debts and has adopted a strict no debt policy relating to school meals. Money owed affects the school's overall budget and must be settled promptly.

The school is not obliged to provide a school dinner where payment is not forthcoming or where authorisation for free school meals has not been received. The school will in exceptional circumstances postpone the refusal to provide meals where parents have advised the Headteacher of their financial situation and the Headteacher is satisfied that payment will be forthcoming.

Policy Aims

- To outline the school's procedures regarding school meals.
- To ensure the smooth, efficient and cost effective operation of school meals provision.
- To clarify the roles and responsibilities of school staff, parents and pupils.
- To present a workable, clear mechanism for the collection of school meals' payments.

School Meals' Payment Procedures

- All pupils in Year R, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to free school meals under the Government's 'Universal Free School Meals' initiative. There is nothing to pay for these year groups.
- For Years 3-6 the cost of school meals is currently £2.50 per day or at no cost to those in receipt of a free school meal (FSM) entitlement.
- Payment for meals is required in advance on a weekly, fortnightly, monthly or half-termly basis.
- Payment must be received on a Monday (or in advance on a Friday for the following week) or the first day of the school week.
- Payments must be made by our online payment system.
- Our online system shows the child's meal history and whether you are currently in credit or arrears.
- Any meals paid for but not taken will result in a credit for future meals. In all cases credits will be refunded to pupils leaving the school.
- In the case of absence, payment must be received on the first day back at school.
- It is the pupil's responsibility to know and inform their teacher whether they are having a school meal or a packed lunch each morning when the dinner register is called.

School Meals

- If a child forgets their packed lunch and has to have a school meal, parents must pay for the meal on the same day or the following morning at the latest (except for FSM pupils).
- If a child's entitlement to free school meals has expired, the parent/carer must provide a packed lunch or make payment for school meals.
- Parents who feel they are entitled to Free School Meals should complete the online form on the South Gloucestershire Council website.

Debt Recovery & Consequence of Non-Payment

- We will only allow a debt of £20 per child to accrue before we will stop providing a school dinner. Parents will be informed by text when they get close to this amount.
- If we feel you are building up this debt prior to leaving the school (Y6 leavers) deliberately we reserve the right to refuse the provision of meals and you will be contacted by the Headteacher.
- Once £20 arrears have been reached, we will not provide a hot dinner and will only provide a basic packed lunch for which a charge will be made unless the parent can make payment or make their own arrangements for lunch.
- In the circumstances where an outstanding debt under £20 is not being cleared; only current meals being paid for and the debt is over 2 months old then we reserve the right to refuse to offer a school meal.
- The provision of a basic packed lunch is an emergency option and will not be offered regularly. Should it become a regular occurrence the Headteacher will contact the parent to discuss any difficulties regarding payment or provision of lunch.
- If the decision is taken to take the child home for lunch, they may not return until the end of the lunch hour.