



School Dinner money policy

The Governing Body is committed to a transparent, consistent and fair approach to the efficient operation of the school dinner system

Aims of this document

- To explain to parents and carers the school's policy regarding school dinners;
- To present a clear, fair way in which the school collects dinner money;
- To work with parents to provide a flexible approach to the dinnertime nutritional needs of all our children;
- To ensure the smooth, efficient and cost effective operation of the school dinner system;
- To clarify the roles and responsibilities of school staff, parents and children;
- To explain how children access school dinners.

School Dinner Policy

School meals are free to all children in the first three years of school – Reception to Year 2. (These are called Universal Infant Free School Meals – UIFSM)

For children in Years 3-6, school meals are available to children at a cost of £2.30 per day or at no cost to those in receipt of free school meal entitlement. (This is called the Pupil Premium entitlement)

Free School Meals

You can register your child for Free School Meals if you receive any of the following benefits:

- Income support
- Income based job seekers allowance
- Income related employment and support allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guaranteed element of state pension credit
- Child tax credit for those who are not entitled to working tax credit and whose annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190
- Universal credit

Please note that where a parent is entitled to working tax credit during the four-week period immediately after their employment ceases, or after they start to work less than 16 hours per week, their children are entitled to free school meals.

Please follow the link below if you think you may be eligible for free school meals:

https://www5.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/site/xfp/scripts/xforms_form.aspx?formID=26&language=en

Paying for School Dinners

The payment for school dinners is required **in advance** on a weekly, half-termly or termly basis. We encourage all parents to use the **Schoolcomms – School Gateway online system** which is both easy for them to use in their own time and efficient for the school to manage. The gateway payment system can be accessed directly from the school website ('for parents' section) or by clicking:

http://bassingbourn.cambs.sch.uk/site/pages/page.php?page=pay_for_school_meals

The Schoolgateway is by far the easiest way to pay for your child's school dinners.

If you do not wish to use the online system, the school can accept cash or cheques but payment must be made in advance. Please give your child a sealed and named envelope containing payment (£2.30 per day/£11.50 per full week). Cheques should be made payable to: Bassingbourn Primary School. Envelopes will be collected from your child in their classroom or can be delivered to the School Office. ***Please note that, as the office is always busy, change will not be given out at that time, so please send in the correct money.***

We can also accept payment by internet banking direct to the school bank account for payments over £6.90 if you would like more details then please email finance@bassingbourn.cambs.sch.uk

Frequently asked questions:

Can my child have a school dinner one day and a packed lunch the next?

Yes. You may choose any combination of school dinner/packed lunch over any number of days/weeks.

What happens if my child is absent and I have paid for school dinners?

Overpayment of dinner money due to absence will remain on the account until reconciliation at the end of the school year when it will be transferred to a sibling or refunded.

What happens if my child has ordered a school dinner but goes home sick?

If your child has a dinner booked and goes home sick, the meal will have to be paid for unless it has been cancelled by 11.00am.

What happens if my child's entitlement to free school meals has expired?

If a child's entitlement to free school meals has expired, the parent/carer must provide a packed lunch or pay for a school dinner.

What happens if my child forgets his/her packed lunch?

If a child arrives at school without a packed lunch, the school will telephone home in the first instance to establish if alternative arrangements have been made.

If your child orders a school dinner which has not been paid for, you will be sent a letter detailing how much you owe. Payment needs to be made immediately via one of the ways listed above. If the matter remains unresolved, the Head Teachers and Governing Body will decide how to address the situation, which may include referring the debt onto a collection agency.

The school cannot tolerate debt amounting to more than one week's payment. If a parent repeatedly fails to provide a packed lunch, or sufficient monies to cover the costs of school dinners, this may be a matter for Social Services.

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.

We will therefore act promptly to address such issues at an early stage, in order to prevent arrears of dinner monies from accumulating.

N.B. If you are experiencing hardship which affects your ability to pay for school dinners, you are invited to speak confidentially to one of the Head Teachers or contact the Education and Welfare Benefits Service, your Health Visitor or Social Services. Information regarding free school meals is available separately on request from the School Office or through the Education and Welfare Benefits Service.