

SUMMERFIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL  
SCHOOL MEALS POLICY

**Aims**

- To outline the school's procedures regarding school meals
- To work with parents to provide a flexible approach to the lunchtime nutritional needs of our pupils
- To ensure smooth, efficient and cost effective operation of the school dinner system
- To clarify the roles and responsibilities of school staff, parents and pupils
- To present a workable, fair mechanism for the collection of school dinner money

**Policy**

School meals are available to pupils at a cost of £2.15 per day (£10.75 per week) or at no cost to those in receipt of a free meal entitlement or those pupils in Key Stage 1.

To enable the service to be efficiently planned the School would prefer advance notice of your child's requirements, although ad-hoc needs can be arranged.

**Paying for school meals.**

The payment for meals is required in advance on a weekly, monthly or half-termly basis.

The school runs a cashless system so meals must be paid for by School Money, which is a secure online payment system.

Secure user names and passwords are provided

Arrangements can be made for cash payments at a local PAYPOINT. Please check with our School Administrator for details.

Should a child arrive at school without a packed lunch and with no credit on their school meal account, the School will telephone or text a parent/carer in the first instance to establish if alternative arrangements have been made.

If a child's entitlement to free school dinners has expired, the parent/carer must provide a packed lunch or make payment for school meals using School Money.

**If payment has not been made**

If your child has taken a school meal which has not been paid for you will be sent a reminder that day either by letter or text detailing how much you owe (Appendix 1).

Payment must be made immediately using School Money. If payment is not received by Friday of that week a further letter will be sent detailing the consequences of non-payment and a final date by which payment must be made (Appendix 2)

If the matter remains unresolved, you will be sent a 3rd and final letter requesting payment and detailing the school's next course of action. (Appendix 3)

The school cannot allow debt amounting to more than one week's payment, as debts have an adverse effect on the school budget. This means that money which should be spent on

the children's education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents. If a parent repeatedly fails to provide a packed lunch, or sufficient monies to cover the cost of school meals, there may be a referral to Social Services as this may have an effect on a pupil's welfare.

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. Some schools are known not to provide a meal in these circumstances but we will aim to act promptly to address such issues at an early stage, and to prevent arrears of dinner monies from accumulating to a point beyond parents means to settle.

The school will, in exceptional circumstances, postpone the refusal to provide meals where parents have advised the school of their financial situation and the school is satisfied that the funding will be forthcoming. Such cases will need to be approved by the headteacher.

The school will work closely with parents in working out a form of payment plan to help resolve the situation if requested by the parent. However, where no attempt is made to clear the debt the school will use HM Courts & Tribunals Service which will incur a further charge of £25 and may affect credit ratings.

Information regarding free school meals is available from the School Office.

**Appendix 1**

A standard text may be sent using School Money which includes the amount of debt or the following letter:

1st Reminder

Parent or carer of .....

Our records show that you have not paid dinner money for your child

.....Class: .....

As at (xx-xx-xx) your account is showing a debt of £-

Please arrange for this money to be paid immediately through your School Money account. Once the debt is cleared please ensure the account is always in credit. The cost of a school meal is £2.15 per day - £10.75 per week.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

## Appendix 2

2nd Reminder

Parent or carer of .....

Our records show that you have not paid dinner money for your child

..... Class: ..... despite a previous written reminder, as at

(xx-xx-xx) your account is showing a debt of £

Please arrange for this money to be paid immediately through your School Money account.

The cost of a school meal is £2.15 per day - £10.75 per week.

Since non-payment for school meals affects the quality of service we offer to the children, we need to ensure that all payments are up-to-date and I am afraid that if the debt is not cleared by the end of this week (xx-xx-xx) it will not be possible to provide your child with a school meal. You will then need to make your own arrangements for your child's lunch.

The school reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to recover the debt and to inform social services of our concerns that you are not providing a meal for your child at lunch time if dinners continue to be ordered without the debt being cleared.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely

**3rd and final reminder**

Parent or carer of .....

Our records show that despite previous reminders you have not paid dinner money for your child ..... Class: ..... as at (xx-xx-xx) your account is showing a debt of £

**In accordance with our school meals policy, your child will not be provided with school dinners as of (xx-xx-xx) until the debt is settled.**

Please ensure you have made sufficient provision for your child's lunch as is your legal responsibility. Once the debt has been cleared your child is welcome to resume school meals with payment in advance.

Please contact school to discuss your outstanding debt, failure to do so will result in the school seeking recovery of costs through HM Courts & Tribunals Service Money Claim Online which will incur a further charge of £25 and will adversely affect your credit rating.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher