



GODFREY ERMEN MEMORIAL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy for the Collection and Management of Dinner Money

Introduction

Godfrey Ermen Primary School has held the accreditation of Healthy School Status. This means that we met the stringent set of criteria required to meet the standard, in areas such as Leadership and Management, Ethos, Learning and Teaching, Care and Partnership with others. Part of our accreditation obviously looked at attitudes to diet at school, and we are committed to providing the highest quality daily food for our learners. We currently offer the children three options at lunch time, which are:

1. A cooked, balanced hot school dinner, with four choices of main meal, a dessert, and water to drink.
2. They may opt to bring their own packed lunch to eat.
3. They may choose to go home for lunch.

School Meals

School meals are provided by Citywide Services, who are an external provider of school meals. They have had many years' experience providing school lunches with the aim of improving children's health and well-being.

Each day, children are given 3 hot choices, plus a selection from the salad bar. There are also 2 choices for dessert and fruit is always available. Citywide follow the strict guidelines from the Government's Nutritional Standards. Menus are displayed around school, so you can see what is on offer each week.

Payments for School Meals

Should parents choose for their child to receive a school dinner, the cost of a dinner currently stands at £1.80 per day, £9.00 a week.

These charges are payable in advance. It is expected that all parents and carers paying for their meals will pay on Monday each week, either by cash in a labelled envelope or by cheque in the same way. Cheques should be made payable to 'Citywide'.

If children are absent, their dinner money is credited for the following week.

Please give one week's notice, if you would like to change from school meals to packed lunches, or vice versa, by informing Mrs Hughes at the School Office.

Free School Meals

Parents or carers who receive the following support may be entitled to Free School Meals:

- income support,
- jobseeker's allowance (income based)
- guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- child tax credit but are **not** entitled to working tax credit and your annual income as assessed by the Inland Revenue does not exceed £16,190

To apply for a free school meal call **0161 909 6508**. Any applications for free school meals will be treated in the strictest confidentiality.

Please note that Free School Meal arrears cannot be backdated so, if you are entitled to them, make sure you apply for them as soon as possible. You must pay for any school dinners that are taken before your application.

Dinner Money Arrears

The school has a very strict policy on dinner money arrears and money collection.

There are three stages of fee monitoring to ensure that all money is paid on time and is not allowed to accumulate in arrears:

Stage 1 – fees that have run into one week of arrears (up to £9.00)

A letter to the parents/carers will be sent by the school, informing you of your outstanding balance, and a deadline for payment.

Stage 2 – fees that have run into arrears of up to two weeks (up to £18.00)

If the deadline is missed, a letter informing you of your outstanding balance and the school's intention to add a 10% administration charge on the outstanding amount will be sent, with another deadline for payment.

Stage 3: FINAL STAGE – fees that have run into arrears of over three weeks (over £18)

We are not prepared to let fees run into arrears of more than two weeks. This is not beneficial to either the school or parents/carers. If this stage is reached, you will be notified of a suspension of the service, and the pupil will need to bring in either a packed lunch, or organise home lunch until the arrears have been cleared.

We do understand that from time to time unavoidable circumstances may arise, which may leave families in difficult positions financially. At *any point* on these stages you can contact the School Office to arrange a payment plan. We would rather you contact us so we can work together to resolve the problem, rather than just allowing the arrears to build up.

These procedures have not been put in place to make life more difficult, but to make all parents and carers aware that you would not normally expect to eat food without payment, for example in restaurants and cafes, and this is the same in school.

The school cannot afford to pay for individual children's dinners. Not only is this not fair, it also affects the amount of resources we are able to buy and the number of staff we can employ - which impacts on all the children in school.