



Nightingale

Primary School

SCHOOL DINNER PAYMENT POLICY

Policy Aims – Reviewed in February 2015

- To outline the School's procedures regarding the administration of school meals.
- To work with parents and carers to provide a flexible approach to the lunchtime nutritional needs of the pupils.
- To ensure the smooth, efficient and cost effective operation of the school dinner internal process.
- To clarify the roles and responsibility of school staff, parents / carers and pupils.
- To stream-line the collection of school dinner money.

Overview

Nightingale School is responsible for the collection and reconciliation of all school dinner money income. Nightingale School is also responsible for all arrears and non-payments.

Parents are responsible for providing a lunch for their child(ren), this may be in the form of a:

- Paid Meal
- Universal Free School Meals (UFSM)
- Application of a Free School Meal Entitlement (FSM)
- Home Packed Lunch
- Home Dinner

Parents must pay for school meals in advance, unless their children have a FSM or UFSM. Application forms for FSM and UFSM are available at the school office.

Nightingale Primary School has set clear procedures for the payment and collection of school meal income and any arrears that occur. Parents and Staff can use Parent Pay for school dinner, breakfast club, after school and trip payments.

Meal Arrangements

- Pupils should opt at the beginning of each term as to whether they wish to have a school meal, a packed lunch from home or a home dinner.
- Should a pupil wish to change these arrangements, parents/ carers should complete a 'Meal Changes Request Form' obtainable from the school office.
- Changes should be notified at the beginning of a half-term wherever possible. However, under special circumstances, a minimum of one weeks notice is required for any change, this is specified as kitchen orders are processed 7 days in advance and accurate numbers are required for ordering.
- If a child forgets their packed lunch and is given a school meal, parents/carers must pay for that meal on the same day or the following morning at the latest (except for children in receipt of Free School Meals)

Payment procedure for school meals

- The cost of the School Meal is currently £10.00 per week, payable in advance - weekly, monthly or half-termly basis
- Parents/ Carers are expected to make payments on Parent Pay for students' meals, breakfast club, after school clubs and trips. This will be implemented from February 2015.
- Those who do not have a bank account will be issued a bar coded letter to pay in any pay point.
- School will not accept cash or cheque payments for these services.
- Refunds may only be given for credits at the end of term, or if a child is leaving the school to attend another

- If a child forgets their packed lunch and is given a school meal, parents/carers must pay for that meal on the same day or the following morning at the latest (except for children in receipt of Free School Meals)

Universal Free School Meals (UFSM) – Reception, Year 1 and 2

- From September 2014 all pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2 will be eligible for universal free school meals, providing a Universal Free School Meal Application has been completed and submitted to the school or the Hackney Learning Trust.

Free School Meals (FSM) – Year 3,4,5 and 6

Parents/Carers who are in receipt of certain benefits, may be entitled to Free School Meals. These include:

- ✓ Income Support
- ✓ Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- ✓ Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- ✓ The guaranteed part of State Pension Credit
- ✓ NASS - Support under PART VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- ✓ Child Tax Credit provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income
- ✓ (as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs) that is £16,190 or below
- ✓ Working Tax Credit for the four week period immediately after your employment has finished
- If a child is eligible for FSM or UFSM , but a parent/career has not made a claim via the Application , and a school meal is given, parents/careers must pay for that meal on the same day
- Parents / Careers must complete an application form for FSM or UFSM if they want to claim a free school meal for their child(ren)
- Parents/ Careers must list all and make a claim for all children that are eligible for a free school meal
- Children who have a packed lunch but who are entitled to FSM or UFSM must notify the school office if changing from one to another.
- Application forms are available from the school office.
- Please be aware that all applications for Free School Meals are treated with the strictest confidence

Debt Policy

The school cannot tolerate debt amounting to more than **one weeks payment**, as if debts are incurred then the school budget has to pay for them. 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 has an affect on a pupil's welfare.

- As from September 2014 the school has adopted a strict NO DEBT policy relating to school meals
- Children will not be provided with a school lunch unless it is paid for in advance (except for those who have a **valid claim** for child(ren) entitled to FSM or UFSM)
- 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 to a point beyond parents means to settle
- If a parent/carer genuinely forgets to pay, the school may grant an exception and allow the parent/carer to pay the following day. This debt must be paid the next day and future meals must be paid for in advance before any meal is provided
- We request that all parents give this policy their full support. If debts are incurred, the school has to pay for the meals eaten. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education has to be used for debts incurred by parents

- If a debt is not cleared, parents/carers must either provide a packed lunch or take the child home for lunch. In a case when a debt payment is not received, nor a packed lunch provided, the Head of School will telephone the parent or carer.
- If a reasonable arrangement to clear a debt cannot be made, the school reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to secure payment
- We hope that by implementing this debt policy we are able to help parents manage school dinner money better and ensure that all money that is for children's' learning is available for that purpose
- The school will in exceptional circumstances postpone the refusal to provide meals where parents have advised the school of their financial situation and school is satisfied that the funding will be forthcoming.
- 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 it will follow the procedure of the school's Debt Management Policy.

Chair's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: Richard Lee