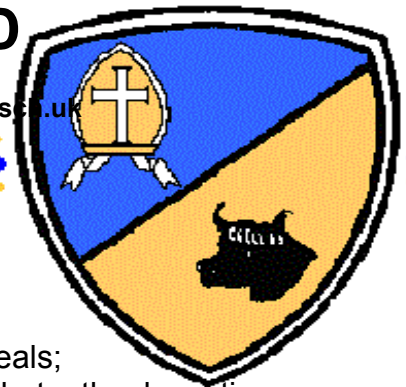


ST. LUKE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

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DATE OF POLICY: Nov 2016

REVIEW DATE: Annually



Church Lane **Aims**

Lowton

Warrington

WA3 2PW

Headteacher Mr S Hardaker

- 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 the 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 £2.10 per day or at no cost to those in receipt of universal infant free school meals or a free meal entitlement.

To enable the service to be efficiently planned the school requires advance notice of your child's requirements and requests meals are pre-ordered using the live kitchen web-site.

Paying for school meals.

The payment for meals is required in advance on a weekly, monthly or half-termly basis. Meals can be paid for by direct debit, or:

- Please send money in to school on a Monday, or the first day of the school week.
- Payments must be in the plastic wallet provided and accompanied by the payment record sheet provided.
- In the case of absence, please send payment on the first day back at school.
- Payment is recorded on the live kitchen website where you can view your payment history, credits, and outstanding balances.
- Refunds for absences cannot be made and credits will be carried forward to pay for future meals.
- Cheques to be made payable to *WMBC St Luke's C E Primary School*. If your cheque or direct debit is returned unpaid you will be charged the relevant banking fee. You may also be charged an administration fee representing 5% of the value of the cheque.

Should a child arrive at school without payment or a packed lunch, the school will telephone home 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 send payment for school meals in a sealed envelope. Please note, claims for free school meals cannot be back dated, therefore parents are liable for the cost of school meals until school receives confirmation from Wigan Council Education Benefits Section. It is parents' responsibility to inform school if entitlement to free school meals end. If entitlement to free school meals ends and meals are taken parents will be billed from the day entitlement ended and not the date they informed school.

If payment has not been made

In the first instance, the school will contact you informally to remind you of the outstanding debt.

If your child has taken a school meal which has not been paid for you will be sent a reminder detailing how much you owe (Appendix 1). Payment must be made immediately and can be sent in with your child or paid directly to the school office. If payment is not received within 5 working days 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 third and final letter requesting payment and detailing the school's next course of action. (Appendix 3)

The school cannot tolerate debt amounting to more than one weeks payment, as when 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.

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, and some schools are known not to provide a meal in these circumstances. 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. Where school refuses to provide a school dinner because of outstanding debt we will inform you in our third and final reminder (appendix 3).

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.

Information regarding free school meals is available from the Education Benefits Service.

APPENDIX 1

Date.....

1st Reminder

Parent or carer of

Our records show that you have an outstanding debt for school meals for your child

.....Class:

As at your account is showing a debt of £.....

Please arrange for this money to be paid immediately. Once the debt is cleared please ensure the account is always in credit. Please send the money to school in a clearly marked envelope.

The cost of a school meal is £2.10 per day - £10.50 per week.

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

Yours sincerely,

Mr S Hardaker
Headteacher

APPENDIX 2

Date.....

2nd Reminder

Parent or carer of

Our records show that you have an outstanding debt for school meals taken by your child..... Class:

Despite a previous written reminder, as atyour account is showing a debt of £.....

Please arrange for this money to be paid immediately. Please send in money to school in a clearly marked envelope

The cost of a school meal is £2.10 per day - £10.50 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 it will not be possible to provide your child with a school meal. You will 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 you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately.

Yours sincerely,

Mr S Hardaker
Headteacher

APPENDIX 3

Date.....

3rd and final reminder

Dear Parent or carer of.....

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

In accordance with our school meal's policy, your child will not be provided with school dinners as of 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 activation of the school's debt management recovery procedure.

Yours sincerely,

Mr S Hardaker
Headteacher

