



4<sup>th</sup> February 2022







Dear Parent/Carers

**Re: Payment for School Meals (children in Years 3 to 6)**

We are glad that so many of our pupils take up the option of a healthy school meal provided by Hertfordshire Catering Limited (HCL) and are grateful to those parents/carers who pay on a regular basis via SchoolGrid.

Unfortunately, it has been brought to my attention that there are a number of parents/carers who are not regularly paying for their child/ren's meals, which is resulting in huge debts for the school. I would like to take this opportunity to remind all parents/carers of the following procedures regarding school meals:



-  **School meals should be paid for IN ADVANCE either on a daily, weekly, monthly, half or full term basis. Parents can also set up a direct debit for their child's meal payments. Payment must be made via SchoolGrid.** SchoolGrid was introduced to the school by HCL to enable parents/carers to have more control and access on information in regards to their child/ren's school meals and to make it easier for parents/carers to make payments and manage their accounts. **The cost of a school meal is currently £2.60, making the weekly cost £13.00.**
-  If your child is absent from school due to illness, it is the parents' responsibility to cancel their own child's meal by 8.50am on the day, otherwise they may incur a charge for the meal.
-  School meals are provided by Hertfordshire Catering Limited and **all dinner payments are owed directly to them via SchoolGrid.** SchoolGrid is required to report to Hertfordshire Catering Limited the number of meals taken and those paid for and not paid for. **If SchoolGrid is unsuccessful in collecting payment for meals taken, Hertfordshire Catering Limited expect the individual debts to be referred directly to them for collection by their Debt Collection Department.**
-  Parents/carers are notified by text/email via SchoolGrid on a weekly basis if their child/ren's dinner money account falls into arrears. Prompt payment is expected in order for children to continue having school meals provided for them. If you are unable or have any difficulty in paying the total amount owed, then please contact the school office straight away.
-  **Please be aware that if you do not keep up to date with making regular payments for your child/ren's meals and/or repeatedly fail to make payment upon request, the school will have no option but to request that you provide a home packed lunch until the outstanding debt is cleared in full and your dinner money account is back in credit. This is to prevent the debt from escalating, enabling the school to work with you to successfully obtain payment and prevent the need for the school to refer the debt to SchoolGrid/Hertfordshire Catering Limited for collection.**
-  If you believe that you may be entitled to free school meals, parents/carers can either apply online at [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals) or contact Hertfordshire County Council free school meals helpline on 0300 123 4048. Please ensure that your entitlement to free school meals is confirmed before your child/ren commence having school dinners, as you will be charged for any meals taken before your entitlement start date.



Thank you in advance for your continuing support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

*T Skeggs*

Mrs T Skeggs  
Executive Headteacher.

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