



St Mary & St Pancras Church of England School

Policy Reviewed by: Lesley Carneiro July 2019
Policy Approved by: Governors July 2019
Review due: July 2020

Statement of intent

As a church school what and how we teach, what and how our pupils learn within and beyond the classroom are and must be rooted in Christian values:

Friendship, Respect, Endurance, Thankfulness and Forgiveness.

These values are fundamental in the implementation of this policy to ensure that we maintain our distinctive Christian character of which we are proud.

School Meal Policy **Collection and Management of Dinner Money**

St Mary's & St Pancras CE School, we are applying for the Healthy School's accreditation award. This means that we must meet the stringent set criteria required to meet the standard, in areas such as Curriculum planning and teaching, health related policies, working with parents, supporting for vulnerable children and young people, culture and environment (pupil voice, school food, promoting healthy lifestyles and wellbeing) and staff health and wellbeing.

Part of our accreditation looks 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 a cooked, balanced hot school dinner, with healthy options to choose from either Vegetarian or Meat, with dessert alongside plain and fresh fruit infused water to drink. They may opt to bring their own packed lunch to eat.

At the start of each school year, we do require information if your child is having a packed lunch or school dinner and if preferred, the Vegetarian option.

If your child would like to change from having a school meal or packed lunch, we do require **4 weeks' notice**. This then enables us to alert the kitchen that figures will change.

- 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 with their name and class, or by cheque in the same way.
- School meals must be paid on the Monday of each week to the office before any meals are taken.
- If a child is absent, their dinner money is credited for the following week.

Free School Meals

Parents or carers who receive the following support may be entitled to free school meals:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Employment Support Allowance (income related)
- National Asylum Seekers Support (NASS)
- Guarantee Element of the State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit Only, but not Working Tax Credit (and have an annual income that does not exceed £16,190)
- Universal Credit – your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including benefits)

If you receive Working Tax Credit and **NO** other qualifying benefit other than Child Tax Credit you will **NOT** be eligible for Free School Meals unless you have:

- stopped work in the last 4 weeks; or
- reduced your hours to less than 16 hours in the last 4 weeks

Application forms for free school meals are available from the School Office or you can download the application form on

<https://contact.camden.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals/>

Universal infant free school meals (UIFSM) provides funding for all government funded schools to offer free school meals to pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2.

Parent/carers of children in these classes **must still apply, so that the school can receive funding if you are eligible.**

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

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 two weeks

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 a deadline for payment.

Stage 3 – FINAL STAGE – Fees that have run into arrears of three weeks

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

Failure to pay any arrears will lead to the debt being passed to the senior management and we may consider seeking legal advice where appropriate.

These procedures have been put in place to make all parents and carers aware of the expectation that as with all meal providers, restaurants and cafeterias, one would not normally expect to eat food without payment. Lack of payment impacts greatly on the school budget which is already over-stretched.

We do, however, understand that from time to time unavoidable circumstances may arise, which may leave families in difficult positions financially. If this situation does arise, then we would urge all parents and carers who find that this is the case to contact the Headteacher with information of this, so that the information can be recorded in confidence and if appropriate, arrangements are put in place to support the lunchtime situation.