

# Barrs Court Primary School

## School Meals Policy

(Non-Statutory Policy Document)

Version No 1

December 2020



<b>Date approved by Headteacher</b>	December 2020	
<b>Date approved by Staff</b>	December 2020	
<b>Committee Responsibility</b>	<b>Name of Committee:</b>	<b>Date of Approval:</b>
	Finance & Premises	February 2021
<b>Date of Full Governing Body Approval (if required)</b>	March 2021	
<b>Policy Review Frequency</b>	3-Yearly	
<b>Next Review Date</b>	March 2024	

## **Barrs Court Primary School School Meals Policy**

School meals are available to all pupils. Our school meals are provided by abm Catering. The current cost of a hot school meal is **£2.20 per day**.

Pupils may have school *lunches* every day, regularly on a chosen day or as a 'one off'.

### **Aims**

- 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.

### **Provision of School Meals**

The Schools Meals Service is no different to any other business in that meals have to be paid for by someone. Free School Meals are available for parents who meet certain criteria including the receipt of state benefits (see below). If any family think they qualify for Free School meals, then an application needs to be submitted. Please contact the school office for further information. Free School Meals are a statutory right and it is important that all parents/carers who qualify take up their child's entitlement so that they can receive a School meal each day.

If a child's entitlement to free school meals expires or the parents/ carers personal circumstances change the parent/carer must provide a packed lunch or make payment in advance for a school dinner.

### **Cost of School Meals**

All children in FS2, Year 1 and Year 2 are currently entitled to a hot school dinner free of charge through the Universal Infant Free School Meal scheme provided by the government.

School meals are available to children in Key Stage 2 at a cost of **£2.20 per day** or at no cost to those in receipt of Free School Meals entitlement.

### **If you meet any of the criteria below, your child is entitled to free school meals in KS2.**

- Child Tax Credit, provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenues and Customs) that does not exceed £16,190
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit run on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

School meals must be paid for in advance. Any revision to the school meal prices will be notified to parents/carers the term prior to the new charge taking effect.

### **Booking & Payment for School Meals**

All parents/carers must book and pay for school lunches online using Parent Pay **PRIOR** to 9.15am on the day that the lunch is required to enable the kitchen to prepare the required numbers of lunches. Log-In details will be sent to parents/carers when their child starts school. Booking and payment for a meal is required in advance.

If your child is not in school for any reason, including illness and a school lunch has been booked, **parents/carers** should **cancel** the booked meal as soon as possible to ensure that they are not charged and that a credit is applied to your account (for KS2 children only) If you are unable to do this, please contact the school office.

Should a child arrive at school without a school lunch booked or a packed lunch provided, the office staff will liaise with the kitchen to ascertain if a lunch can be made available. If this is not possible, an alternative option will be provided (ie beans on toast, eggs on toast). The ParentPay system will be updated and a text message sent to parents/carers to inform them that a meal was not booked in advance.

### **Arrears**

As the hot school lunches are pre-booked and paid for in advance, this avoids any arrears occurring. However, if the office staff book a meal on behalf of a parent/carer will create an arrears for that meal which MUST be cleared by parents/carers at the earliest opportunity. The office staff carefully monitor any arrears and will contact parents/carers in the first instance by text and this will be followed up by a letter if the arrears are still outstanding.

When the debt exceeds £10 for a child, or £20 for a family (whichever comes first), a formal letter will be sent to the parent/carer informing them to provide their child/children with a packed lunch to prevent further arrears.

The school cannot tolerate debt amounting to more than £10 per child (£20 per family) as any debts have to be paid by the school. This means that the money that should be spent on education is used to pay for debts incurred by parents/carers. If a parent fails to provide a packed lunch or sufficient money is not paid to cover the cost of a school meal, there may be a referral to social care as this has an effect on a child's welfare. It is not the responsibility of the school to provide lunch for pupils. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to provide a meal, either a school lunch or a packed lunch.

The school is not obliged to provide a school meal 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.

### **Consequences of Non Payment for School Meals**

If the debt exceeds £30 for a child, or £50 for a family, and/or action proves unsuccessful in securing dinner money arrears, the school reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to recover the debt. Social Services may also be informed that these parents/carers are not carrying out the responsibility of care by not providing food for their child at lunchtimes.

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 we will contact South Gloucestershire Council and will follow their procedure for Debt Management.

Any information regarding free school meals is available from the School Office.

# Barrs Court Primary School



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Website: [www.barrscourtprimary.co.uk](http://www.barrscourtprimary.co.uk)

Headteacher: Daniel Webster

Parent or carer of (Pupil Name)  
(Address Line 1) (Address Line 2)  
(Address Line 3)  
(Post Code)  
Date: XX/XX/XX

Dear xxx

School Meals provided to (Pupil Name)

According to the School's financial records you have not paid dinner money for your child (pupil name) in Class: xx. As at xx/xx/xx your account is showing a debt of £xx.

Please make arrangements for the outstanding dinner money debt to be paid immediately.

Once you have cleared the current debt I should be grateful if you could ensure that you keep your account in credit.

The current cost of a school meal is £x per day or £x per week.

If you think you may qualify for Free School Meals, please contact the school office for further information. Remember that Free School Meals are a statutory right and it is important that you use it if you qualify, your child will then receive a School meal each day. Additional information and an application form can be found on the South Gloucestershire website <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/advice-and-benefits/benefits/free-school-meals/> or from our School office.

If you have any queries regarding these arrears or wish to discuss the matter further please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

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Headteacher: Daniel Webster

Parent or carer of (Pupil Name)  
(Address Line 1) (Address Line 2)  
(Address Line 3) (Post Code)  
Date: XX/XX/XX

Dear xxx

School Meals provided to (Pupil Name)

I am writing regarding the current level of outstanding school meal debt that is showing on your account. Despite previous correspondences and messages the debt for your child xx in Class xx is still outstanding. The School's records show that as at xx/xx/xx your account is £x in debt. The current cost of a school meal is £x per day or £x per week. I would ask that you please make arrangements to clear this debt immediately and take steps to ensure your account is kept in credit in the future.

If you think you may qualify for Free School Meals, please contact the school office for further information.

Remember that Free School Meals are a statutory right and it is important that you use it if you qualify, your child will then receive a School meal each day. Additional information and an application form can be found on the South Gloucestershire website <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/advice-and-benefits/benefits/free-school-meals/> or from our School office.

Unfortunately, if the debt is not cleared by xxxxx a school meal will no longer be provided to your child and you must make your own arrangements for your child's lunch. The School reserves the right to begin legal proceedings to recover the outstanding debt and to inform the local authority that your child is not being provided with a suitable meal at lunch time. If you have any queries regarding these arrears, please contact the school office immediately so that this matter can be resolved.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher