

Sparsholt C. E. Primary School

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Dear Parents

Payment of school meals, clubs and activities

As you are aware, at lunchtimes children may have a hot meal or bring in a packed lunch. The hot meals are cooked on the premises by Hampshire's HC3S staff, who offer a choice of menu each day (including a meat and vegetarian option, jacket potatoes and a picnic bag in the summer term).

Currently priced at £2.15 (£2.30 from September 2018), these meals offer great value for money. Years R, 1 & 2 and those with free meals entitlement do not currently have to pay for meals. For all other years currently payment is taken in arrears with the school office sending out half termly invoices. At this point, almost £3,000 is owed to the school for lunches taken. For those with amounts outstanding, please can you endeavour to clear these before the end of the Summer term or speak to me to agree alternative arrangements.

Unfortunately due to further budgetary cuts imposed on the school and the time and logistics behind chasing for payment, and having had advice from the HCC, we are going to change the way these meals are paid for. From the beginning of the Autumn term 2018, you will be required to pay for school lunches half termly in advance. This is what nearly all other schools in the county do and we're now just bringing ourselves into line.

For the half term, Mon 3rd September to Fri 19th October 2018 (7 weeks), the amounts we're looking for you to pre-fund are follows:

| Number of days lunches are taken | One day per week | Two days per week | Three days per week | Four days per week | Five days per week |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 child at school | £16.10 | £32.30 | £48.30 | £64.40 | £80.50 |
| 2 children at school | £32.20 | £64.60 | £96.60 | £128.80 | £161.00 |

For administrative purposes, wherever possible, we would prefer payment to be made online using the Scopay website or app but cheques and cash are also accepted in the office. If you need support in setting up or using the online system please ask in the office.

We understand that, on occasions, things change and children may require additional or fewer meals than planned. If your child needs extra school dinners than originally envisaged, you can always top up your meal payments online and if your child needs fewer meals, credit will be carried over to the following week/weeks.

To be clear, this change in policy will not affect those children eligible for either Free School Meals (Yr R to Yr 6) or Universal Free School Meals (KS1).



Music Lessons, School Clubs & Activities

Similarly, music lessons and school-led paid clubs will now also need to be paid for in advance. There has been an increase in the number of children attending these classes for which payment hasn't been forthcoming. Once again, if you have money owing, please can these be cleared before the end of term. As a school we value hugely these extra curricular activities and clubs but financially, we just can't support this non-payment.

From September 2018 once lessons or clubs are booked for your child, if payment hasn't been received within 2 weeks from the start of each term, you will be notified and your child will be asked to stop attending.

I appreciate fully that this is a radical change in the way meals and activities are paid for. The costs aren't increasing, we just need to ensure that costs are covered and paid for. To give some perspective, the amount we are currently owed would pay for an extra teaching assistant. If we don't change to a pre-paid policy, we'll have to make cuts elsewhere and/or just stop providing some of these quality activities.

If you do find yourself in financial difficulty, please don't hesitate to come and speak to me personally – we will manage it together.

Thank you for your support and co-operation with this matter.

Yours sincerely

Lynn Laver
Headteacher