

INFORMATION/TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Debt

Hitherfield Primary School has a strict no debt policy with regard to school meals. If you do not pay in advance we will contact you by telephone and write to you. If you do not clear your debt we will withdraw the meal and you will be required to provide your child with a packed or home lunch until the debt has been cleared.

If debts are incurred it means that valuable funding which should be directed to our children's education is not available. Every parent and carer will agree that this is an unacceptable situation. Therefore we request that all parents give this policy their **full support**.

No parent or carer would take their child out for a meal and expect their child to be given food without payment, the same applies in school.

Free School Meals

If a parent or carer believes that they may be entitled to a Free School Meal, please complete the relevant section on the Meal Contract and hand to the relevant School office. Applications can take up to two weeks to process and Free meals cannot be backdated therefore parents **must pay for meals until confirmation of entitlement is received from school in writing**. Further guidance and advice can be found on www.education.gov.uk.

Free School Meal entitlement cannot be backdated and will only apply from the date application is confirmed by the Local Authority.

Paying for School Meals

Parents and carers must pay **in advance** and can do so online via Parentpay or in local shops who display the PAYPOINT sign. Passwords and paypoint cards can be obtained from the school office.

Providing a School Meal

It is the parent or carers responsibility to ensure that their child has appropriate food at lunch time.

In order for a school meal to be provided, the child must either be eligible via Free School Meals or their **School Meal account must be in credit**. If a parent forgets to pay in advance, **the school may grant a debt allowance of one meal. However this debt must be paid the next day and the account brought into credit**.

Action the School may take

In a case where the account is in debt and a packed lunch has not been provided, the school will contact the parent to either provide a packed lunch, pay for the school meal or come in and collect the child to be taken home for lunch. If the child is collected, they will need to be returned to school before afternoon registration or they will be marked absent.

If payment of outstanding debt is not received in a timely fashion, the School may:

- **Arrange for Social Services to be informed.**
- **Refer debt to legal/debt collecting agencies.**

Data Protection.

We are committed to ensuring that the personal and sensitive information that we hold about you is protected and kept safe and secure, and we have measures in place to prevent the loss, misuse or alteration of your personal information. We will use the information you provide to assess entitlement to free school meals. The information may also be shared with other Council departments to offer benefits and services. More information about how we use and store your data can be found in the Privacy Notices and Data Protection Policy on the website.

