

Crosslee Community Primary School



Dinner Money Policy

September 2022

Rationale

Crosslee Community Primary School Dinner Money Policy has been adopted to ensure a consistent and fair approach to debt incurred by parents whose children have school meals.

Provision of School Meals

Parents of pupils at Crosslee have the choice of paying for a school lunch for their child or providing a healthy packed lunch. All school meals are prepared on the premises and meet the government guidelines regarding the provision of healthy school meals.

Notification of a change in meal arrangement from school dinner to packed lunch or vice versa must be given verbally or in writing to the school office, one week in advance.

Free School Meals

Free school meals are available to those who are entitled to certain benefits. To check free school meal eligibility, parents can speak to a member of staff in the school office or apply online via the Manchester City Council (MCC) website.

It is important that eligible families apply for free school meals as this attracts pupil premium funding to the school. Parents will be encouraged to apply if they meet the eligibility criteria.

If a child's entitlement to free school meals expires or the parents personal circumstances change, the parent must inform the school and provide a packed lunch or send payment in advance for a school dinner.

Children in Reception to Year 2 are automatically entitled to a Universal Infant Free School Meal (UIFSM). Parents are not required to apply for a UIFSM, however if the family are in receipt of benefits, they will be encouraged to apply for free school meals via MCC. This will attract additional pupil premium funding to the school.

Payment of School Meals

School meals are currently available to children at a cost of £2.20 per day. Any revision to the price of meals will be notified to parents during the term prior to the new charge taking effect.

Payment is to be made weekly online via Parent Pay.

Cash is no longer accepted.

If a child is absent their dinner money will be credited for the following week.

If a child forgets their packed lunch and is given a school meal, the parent must pay on the same or following day unless they are entitled to free school meals or a UIFSM.

Management of School Meal Debt

To ensure that the school budget is not adversely affected by the cost of school meal debt, the school has a clear 'no debt' policy. In the event of a parent failing to pay for school meals, the following steps will be taken.

- 1) Reminders will be sent by school spider message or phone call to parents who have not paid for school meals the current week.
- 2) If dinner money is not paid, a follow up message will be sent. Parents may also be contacted by telephone or letter.
- 3) If no payment is made after two weeks, parents will be issued with a letter of withdrawal of their school meals and informed to provide their child with a packed lunch. Once the arrears have been paid or a repayment plan is in place, the school is happy to resume school meal provision.
- 4) If payment is not received after one month, the School Business Manager will contact the parent to request payment and discuss a payment plan, if necessary.
- 5) Further attempts will be made to recover if the debt remains outstanding.
- 6) If the action above is unsuccessful, the Governors will discuss individual cases and decide on the appropriate course of action. In some cases, the school may have no option but to refer the outstanding debt to Manchester City Council's Debt Recovery department. This course of action may result in legal proceedings.

We hope by implementing this policy we are able to help parents manage school dinner money and ensure that the school budget is available for the children.

Mental Health

The mental health of children and adults in school, parents and carers and the wider whole school community will impact on all areas of development, learning, achievement and experiences. All children have the right to be educated in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody. All adults have the right to work in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody.

Crosslee offers a learning environment that promotes and enhances positive mental health. A consistent approach means that the school environment and school ethos all promote the mental health of the whole school community.