



Parents' Guide to our School Dinner Money Policy

Eversley Primary School Dinner Money Policy

Children can order school dinners daily. Meals should be paid for on the day that they are ordered, through Parent Pay, our online payment system.

If debts are incurred, the school budget has to pay for them. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education has to be used to pay for debts incurred by parent/s. The school budget cannot support this debt.

This leaflet explains what will happen if any debts are incurred.

Stage 1

If a child incurs debts for unpaid dinner money, which reaches a total of **£10.00** (equivalent to one week's dinner money per pupil), the school will send an email reminder via Parent Pay to the parent during the week. This email will ask the parent/s to pay the debt as soon as possible.

If you need to discuss any problems with the school regarding the debt, then please come to school and discuss this immediately.

Stage 2

If after a week there is still an arrears of £10.00, an email will be sent asking parent/s to pay the debt by a specified date and ask them to either:

- o provide a packed lunch from home for their child or
- o collect their child and take them home for lunch each day until the debt has been cleared

Stage 3

If the parent/s still does not pay the debt by the specified date, a meeting will be held in school to discuss how the debt can be paid and actions to be taken.

Stage 4

If the parent/s does not comply with any of these options, the Headteacher will send a final letter explaining that the school will begin proceedings against the parent to recover the debt.

Any questions?

Please do come into school if you have any questions or queries about your child's school meals.

Free School Meals

It is important for children to have a good nutritious meal at lunch time. If you can't afford school dinners, you may be eligible for free school meals.

To be eligible you must be receiving one of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (not Working Tax Credit), with an annual income of below £16,190
- Pension Guarantee Credit
- Employment and Support Allowance, income related
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit, with an income of £7,400 or less

To apply for free schools meals please complete the online application form available at www.essex.gov.uk.

If you are eligible for free school meals, and your circumstances change in any way (such as changing address or school, or when registering another child) you will need to contact the Team via educationawards@essex.gov.uk to advise the team of these changes.

Please note that all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to receive a free school meal, regardless of income, in line with the Government's Universal Infant Free School Meals initiative. There is no need to make an application to the Local Authority for parents of these children.

Therefore, you should only apply for free school meals in the July of the year that your child is entering Year 3, or if your child is Year 4 or older if you believe you meet the low income eligibility criteria.

Please contact the School Office for more information on 01268 555333.