



Cam Hopton Church of England Primary School (Voluntary Aided)

Life in all its fullness

School Meals Debt Policy

Document History

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This policy is to be reviewed in line with other related policies and any other documentation from the DfE, Ofsted and Gloucestershire Diocese.

School Meals Debt Policy

This policy has been written to help Cam Hopton CE Primary School adopt a consistent approach to debt incurred by parents whose children take school dinners. For the purpose of this policy and for readability we use the term parent to mean parent or carer.

This policy provides clarity and consistency in managing the debt and will also help parents clearly understand what is expected of them. The school meals service is no different than any other business and the meals must be paid for by someone.

Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to *Universal Infant Free School Meals (UISFM)* and therefore do not need to pay for school meals should they choose to order one. Children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, must pay for their meals unless they are entitled to *Free School Meals*.

The Free School Meals system is there for parents who cannot afford school meals and can be applied for online: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/free-school-meals/apply-for-free-school-meals/>

Help is available with your application either at the school office or by following the link above.

The governors at Cam Hopton feel that a system that works best is a 'no debt' approach. We have a duty of care to our parents to restrict the opportunity to get into debt. We also have a duty of care for the wellbeing of the children in our school and it is our aim that no child should go without food in school.

School meals are paid for directly by parents, through an online system called **ParentPay**.

We understand that there are times when parents may forget to top up their school meals account or a child needs a school meal unexpectedly. The school Administrator has oversight of this and there is a process of reminder messages to ensure the school is reimbursed for the meal given. However occasionally a decision will have to be made about whether a child should be refused a meal in school if parents have regularly not paid and/or built up a debt. If this happens we will inform parents in advance to provide a packed lunch, so that the child does not go without food.

In all instances where a debt has been built up, this must be paid for by the parents and we will offer them the opportunity to pay in affordable increments.

If a parent is suffering temporary financial problems it is important that they inform the school immediately, in case there is support available. We are also able to offer meetings with a school employed Family Support Worker, who may be able to sign post parents to financial support and advice. All conversations will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Cam Hopton CE Primary School is committed to equality, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This school aims to serve the community by providing high quality education and promoting Christian Values.