



For Learning That Lasts A Lifetime

7th January 2026

Dear Parent/Carers of Children in Years R, 1 and 2

Universal Infant Free School Meals - Thursday 15th January 2026

We continue to have a fantastic uptake on hot school meals and the children are clearly enjoying the menu.

As you know, school meals for children of this age are centrally funded by the government– a great financial boost for families I am sure you will agree. On Thursday, 15th January the school census is taken when all sorts of information is collated which leads directly to how much money the school receives, this now includes the school receiving the money to pay for your child's free meals. **We will only receive money to pay for your child's hot dinners, at any point during the year, if they eat a school meal on the census day in January.** Therefore, I am writing to you to ask that **all** children register to have a hot school meal on Thursday 15th January.

I wish to assure anyone who is unsure about the hot meals that you do not need to worry if your child cannot manage with a knife and fork – we have plenty of staff on hand to assist or they can of course use a spoon. No child is ever forced to eat anything they don't like. The menus are published on the 'Whole School Meals' website for your reference and you can share this information with your child. If you are concerned that your child may not eat well enough on census day, you can of course send in a packed lunch on that day too.

By eating on the census day **you secure the funding for your child for the year and then you are flexible to choose when/if they eat hot school lunches** – perhaps in relation to what is on the menu for any given day. If your child does not eat a school lunch on the census day, but they do at other times during the year, the money to pay for this will have to come directly from the school budget. As you will appreciate this is money which will have been committed to other expenditure.

For your information, the menu on Thursday, 15th January will be beef bolognese/veggie bolognese, pasta, carrots and sweetcorn or jacket potato with cheese & beans. In addition, there is a range of salads to choose from. The main dish will be followed by a serving of Chelsea bun or fresh fruit/jelly.

I hope that this letter makes sense and that you understand the reason for my writing to you. I thank you in advance for your support with this important matter. As always, if you seek clarification or wish to comment please don't hesitate to make contact with me – by email or by making an appointment at the school office.

Yours sincerely

Mr C Ward
Headteacher