

School Meals Policy

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Introduction

At Drapers' Maylands Primary School we believe that healthy eating plays a vital role in supporting the well-being and education of our pupils. Unlike other schools, staff and children eat together at lunchtime which enables us to create an opportunity for our children to learn table manners, enjoy the co-operative aspects of a meal and competently learn to use the tools for eating. We are committed to ensuring that the meals served are healthy and comply with nutritional requirements for Primary children, in addition to celebrating together, growing our own food and learning about how meals are prepared.

The collaborative lunchtime provides an ideal opportunity to ensure that opportunities for personal, social, health and well-being take place in addition to classroom activities based on curriculum planning.

The dining experience is enhanced by the opportunity for children to co-operate by taking turns to be the 'server' for their table, enabling children to take responsibility for others and engage with friends in a purposeful way at mealtime. Responsibilities include clearing away plates, counting out cutlery and serving food to their dining companions. This ensures that children develop independent dining skills and are able to continue to develop these skills as they progress through the year groups. Older children will enjoy their dining experiences because of the foundations laid when they are in Reception classes.

Why is there no option for packed lunch in school?

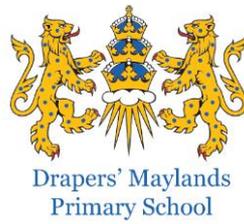
According to the School Food Plan research, only 1% of packed lunches meet the nutritional standards that currently apply to school food. As part of our commitment to the well-being of our pupils, we are able to prepare and serve meals from our own kitchen for every child. The experience of dining together, eating a hot nutritionally balanced lunch has had a significant impact on personal, social, physical and academic progress of our children. It is important that we continue to do so for every child.

What are the benefits of a school lunch?

Current Government information warns that over a third of Primary school children will leave for Secondary school already obese. We are committed to ensuring that our children enjoy eating a range of vegetables, fruit and carefully considered meals so that we can combat this concerning prediction for the pupils at Maylands.

There are many benefits to our School Meals Policy:

- Children are more able to concentrate on learning throughout the afternoon after a complete nutritious and healthy lunch
- Facts! There are many studies to support the facts that well-nourished children do better at school



- Children have a greater appreciation for cultural, fresh and seasonal ingredients
- Children are able to enjoy the dining experience with friends
- Children are able to learn dining etiquette and how to use knives, forks and spoons competently
- Fussy eaters are much more likely to try new foods when eating alongside their peers, leading to a much broader experience and preference for a range of foods
- All children have opportunities to be 'helpers' and rewards are given for chosen helpers, children who are trying new foods and good table manners

What if my child has allergies?

The menu is designed to ensure that nutritional guidance is met using a range of seasonal produce and offers alternatives for those with dietary requirements.

Detailed dietary requirements are requested on entry to school and should be confirmed by the school office for clarification by parents and carers.

What is the menu?

The meal plans are based on nutritional requirements for Primary children from the Havering Local Authority Catering Service. The three-week menu is trialled before the School Council gather information from the children in the school. A Maylands' menu is designed with general preferences, compliant with nutritional balance and requirements for healthy eating and produced to share with the school community. There are three choice options available, always including a vegetarian choice so that children are able to select meals which they will enjoy.

All children have opportunities to be 'helpers' and rewards are given for chosen helpers, children who are trying new foods and good table manners. This ensures that children develop independent dining skills and are able to continue to develop these skills as they progress through the year groups. Older children will enjoy their dining experiences because of the foundations laid when they are in Reception classes.

How much do the school meals cost?

School Meals cost £2.20 per day or £11 per week.

Some families may be eligible for Free School Meals which is based on Universal Credit. Further information and application details are available from the school office.

The school also offers School Meals Funding for families who are in financial hardship but not eligible for the Free School Meals. Further details for how to apply, who is eligible and evidence required to support application is available from the school office.

What if I do not agree with this policy?

Any parent/ carer who has a concern or complaint regarding the application of this policy should follow the procedures set out in the Complaints Policy – DCP 002.