

ST. ALOYSIUS' CATHOLIC JUNIOR SCHOOL

DINNER MONEY POLICY

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Through Jesus, we learn, love and grow together

St Aloysius' Catholic Junior School holds the accreditation of a bronze award from Healthy School London. This means that we meet the stringent criteria required to meet the standard. Part of our accreditation looked at attitudes to diet at school, and we are committed to providing the highest quality daily food for our learners.

We currently offer the children a cooked, balanced hot school dinner, with healthy options to choose from either Vegetarian or Meat, with a dessert and fresh fruit alongside water to drink. The children may also opt to bring their own packed lunch to eat.

At the start of each school year we require parents to let the school know whether their child is having a packed lunch or school dinner and if they have any allergies or dietary preferences. If your child would like to change from having a school meal, or packed lunch during the year we require 2 weeks' notice in writing. This then enables us to alert the Kitchen that figures will change.

It is the parent's responsibility to provide a lunch for their child(ren); this may be in the form of a paid meal, application of a free meal entitlement or a packed lunch from home.

Parents must pay for school meals IN ADVANCE unless their child(ren) have a free school meal entitlement.

St Aloysius' Catholic Junior School has a clear set procedure for the payment and collection of school meal money and any arrears that occur.

Meal Arrangements

- Pupils should opt at the beginning of each year (September) as to whether they wish to have a school meal or a packed lunch from home.
- Should a pupil wish to change this arrangement, parents should complete a meal changes form obtainable from the school office.
- Changes should be notified at the beginning of a half-term wherever possible. However, a minimum of two weeks' notice is required for any changes, this is specified as kitchen orders are processed several weeks in advance and accurate numbers are required for ordering purposes.
- Should a pupil, who usually has packed lunches, forget their meal or require a

lunch due to exceptional circumstance-s, then a school meal will be provided. Payment for meals of this nature are due on the day taken or the next day of school at the latest.

Reminder letters will be sent to parents who have not paid for school meals that week. Parents may also be contacted by telephone and/or text message.

Should arrears total three weeks then parents will be required to send packed lunches for their child(ren) until the debt is cleared.

In the event that a school dinner is expected when arrears stand at three weeks then parents will be contacted by the school administrator and will be expected to bring a packed lunch to school in time for lunch that day.

In the event that the debt is not recovered and packed lunches are not provided from home, the school reserves the right to request advice and assistance from the Parent Liaison Officer or in extreme cases Children's Services.

If a cessation of service letter has been issued, a parent will not have the option of transferring back to school meals unless the debt has been cleared. If the debt has been cleared the child will be allowed to transfer back to meals ONLY if they have been paid for in advance. If payment is not received in advance then the meal service will cease immediately.

Debts will be carried over between terms and remain with the child across the years in school to allow the maximum time for arrears to be recovered. Debts will not be written off.

Continuation of non-payment of arrears will result in being referred to the Local Authorities Legal Department. All costs incurred from this referral will be the responsibility of the parent.

If your child is absent from school and meals have been paid for, these will be carried forward as credits and the following weeks payments will be adjusted accordingly. If credits continue to the end of term they will be refunded back to parents in the form of cash at the end of academic school year.

Meal Charges

The price of school meals is £2.30 per day, £11.50 per week (September 2015). The revision of charges for school meals will take place as advised by Camden LA. Wherever possible, parents will be notified of any increase during the term prior to the new charge.

The school will adopt the pricing recommended by the local authority, but will try to keep costs down to a minimum.

Meal Payments

All parents are expected to pay for school meals unless the pupil is in receipt of a free school meal.

□ Parent/s must pay in advance for school meals using the payment methods outlined below:

Cash or cheque in a labelled envelope with their name and class

□ All cash payments must be handed directly to the school office at the beginning of the school day. We ask that all cash payments are handed in by the parents whenever possible and not given to the child to hand in. A receipt will be always be given; the school will not be liable for missing money not handed directly to a staff member of the school office or where a receipt cannot be presented by the parent.

□ Parents should query any discrepancies immediately. This also applies to instances where you have given your child cash to pay in and they have not bought home a receipt to give you. The school may not be able to investigate if it has not been brought to our attention within the week of the occurrence.

Free School Meals

Parents or carers who receive the following support may be entitled to free school meals:

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Employment Support Allowance
- National Asylum Seekers Support (NASS)
- Guarantee Element of the State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit Only, but not Working Tax Credit (and have an annual income that does not exceed £16,190)

If you receive Working Tax Credit and **NO** other qualifying benefit other than Child Tax Credit you will **NOT** be eligible for Free School Meals.

Application forms for free school meals are available online from the Camden LA website by clicking on the following link:

<http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/education/schools/pupil-benefits-and-allowances/free-school-meals.en?page=2Application>

All applications and entitlements will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Dinner Money Arrears

The school has a very strict policy on Dinner Money Arrears and money collection. There are two stages of fee monitoring to ensure that all money is paid on time and is not allowed to accumulate in arrears:

Stage 1 – Fees that have run into one week of arrears

A letter to the parents/carers will be sent by the school, informing you of your outstanding balance and the school's intention to serve a cessation of service notice if the outstanding amount is not paid, with a deadline for payment.

Stage 2 – FINAL STAGE - Fees that have run into arrears of two weeks

The school is not prepared to let fees run into arrears of more than two weeks. This is not beneficial to the school or parents/carers. If the debt is not cleared by the

Friday of the second week, you will be notified of an immediate cessation of the service, and the pupil will need to bring in a packed lunch on the Monday of the third week until the arrears have been cleared.

Failure to pay any arrears will lead to the debt being passed to the local authority for collection. The school also reserves the right to initiate legal proceedings to recover the debt.

We request that all parents give this policy their full support. These procedures have been put in place to make it fair to all parents and to make carers aware of the expectation that as with all meal providers, restaurants and cafeterias, one would not normally expect to eat food without payment. If debts are incurred, the school has to pay for the meals eaten. This means that money which should be spent on the children's education has to be used for debts incurred by parents.

We do, however, understand that from time to time, a genuine case of temporary hardship may arise which may leave families in financial difficulty. If parents find themselves in such a position, we would urge them to contact the Head Teacher to discuss the issue in confidence and, if appropriate, arrangements could be put in place to support them.

This policy was written by Mrs Lilian Mak the School Business manager and was presented to the Governing Body on Thursday 4th February 2016

The policy is to be reviewed in Spring 2020

Signed.....

Chair of the Governing Body

Date: 4.2.16