

LOVE  
SCHOOL  
— Meals —

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW  
ABOUT SCHOOL MEALS

# New beginnings

Whether starting school for the first time or entering a new year group, the new school year brings a fresh start with lots of exciting, and sometimes daunting, new experiences for children. Lunchtimes are a really fun part of the school day with lots of different, delicious and healthy foods for children to enjoy. This leaflet is about making sure you're absolutely up to date with everything you need to know about school meals.



## Who are CHARTWELLS?

We are the leading provider of catering services to schools in the UK and serve over 2,000 schools across the country.

All our meals are healthy, tasty and nutritious, supporting childrens' development in school. Each one is freshly prepared by a dedicated and passionate team of chefs and kitchen staff. Our philosophy is Eat, Learn, Live which ensures we educate young people about how to lead a happy, safe and healthy lifestyle while contributing to a sustainable world.



### Brilliant Value

We believe that enjoying a nutritious hot meal at lunch time is always better than a packed lunch...and it's even better when it's free!

Save £400  
a year  
on average

### How do school meals compare to packed lunches?

On average the saving of switching to school meals from packed lunches is £400 throughout the school year – and this doesn't account for the amount of time you would save too! Not only this, but school meals are nutritionally balanced and studies have shown that children who eat a school meal are more effective in the classroom during the afternoon.



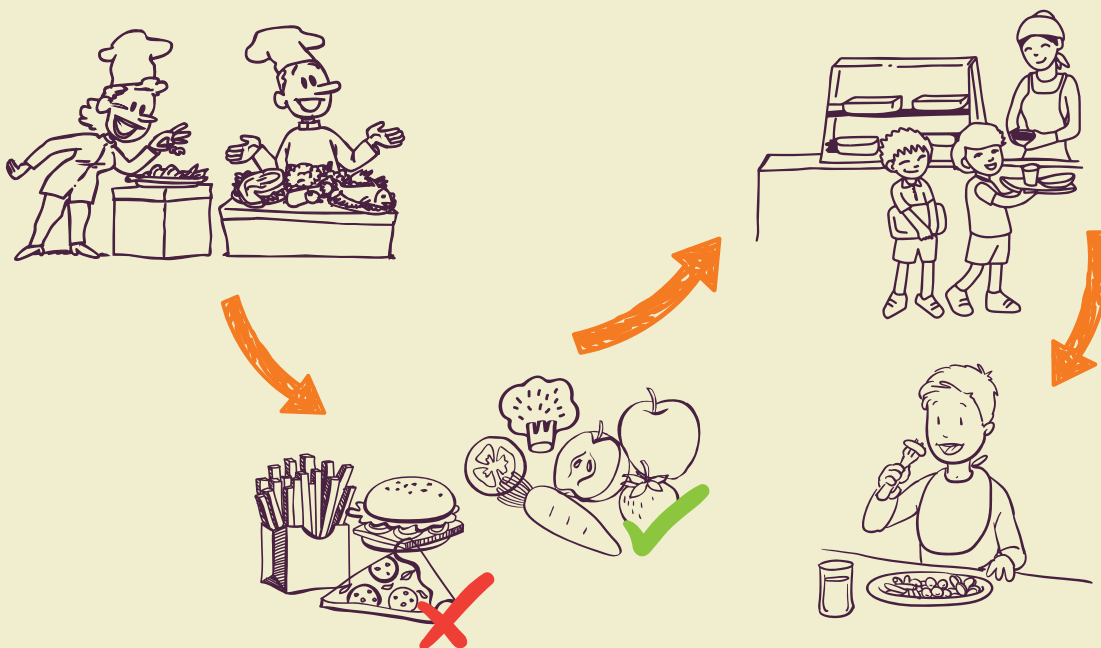
Did you know that if your child is starting Reception, or heading in to Year 1 or 2 that they are entitled to a free meal, every day?

## All things nutrition

We know that the health and wellbeing of your child is paramount when they are at school, especially when it comes to lunchtime. At Chartwells we have a dedicated team of Nutritionists across the country who make sure that the food we serve at school is the most nutritious as possible.

School meals by law must meet the School Food Standards. These ensure that when menus are developed they are considerate of children's nutritional needs. Implementing these standards

ensures that healthier food items, like fruit and vegetables, wholegrains and oily fish, are promoted, and less healthy items, like deep fried foods, manufactured meat products and added sugar drinks are restricted or prohibited on menus. Every day, you can be assured that a school meal will offer; 2 portions of fruit and vegetables, a dairy food item rich in calcium for strong bones and teeth, starchy carbohydrates to provide energy, and a protein source to support the body's growth and repair.



## Variety is the spice of life

All of our main meals and desserts have been sampled by groups of children and are in-line with the Children's Food Trust portion size recommendations. Our menus are planned specifically for each area, based on local preference and always include children's favourites such as mozzarella & tomato pizza, pasta bolognese, weekly roast dinners and crunchy plum crumble and custard.

**'I can't believe the impact that eating with school friends at lunchtime has had on my son. He talks of food that he's eaten that I have never been able to get him to eat at home, and as a result, we now all enjoy mealtimes as a family.'** Will Taylor (Parent), Year One Pupil

Please refer to a copy of your schools menu for the daily options available.

## Making lunchtimes even more memorable

Creating even more excitement with special theme days is another way we help children to great memories. Our theme days add excitement, turn lunchtimes into real events and they're educational too! Throughout the academic year, we deliver theme day menus; they feature favourites such as British, American and Italian, as well as exciting picnic and BBQ days too! It's all about encouraging the children to try different things, experience new tastes and learn a bit about the food and cultures on their activity mats too!

# Frequently Asked Questions

**We know that starting a new school can be a daunting experience for little ones. We have compiled some frequently asked questions below to reassure you that your child's dining experiences at school will be positive ones!**

## **My child is new to the school and is in reception or KS1, how do I pay for school meals?**

In 2014, the Government introduced free school meals for all children in the UK in reception and years 1 and 2. This means that any child in these year groups are entitled to a delicious hot meal free of charge. Please contact your child's school or school catering manager for more details.

## **I want my child to start having school meals, where can I find the menu?**

Our menus are displayed on the board in the schools reception and on the schools website, and we will also send menu flyers home in children's book bags. Additionally, look out for menus at [www.loveschoolmeals.co.uk](http://www.loveschoolmeals.co.uk)

## **What is included in a school meal?**

Each school meal consists of a protein item (either meat, fish or vegetarian options), 2 vegetables (e.g. broccoli/sweetcorn/carrots), a starchy carbohydrate (e.g. pasta/rice/potato), and a pudding.

## **Will my child be able to switch between having a homemade packed lunch and a school meal?**

Yes. As school meals are not mandatory, you are able to switch between packed lunches and school meals. Remember though that school meals are free to those children in reception and years 1 & 2, and provide a nutritionally balanced, delicious meal. Please note some schools have local policies regarding meal ordering so please check this with your school before placing orders.

## **I want my child to be able to have school meals but they have an allergy/require a special diet. Do you cater for special diets?**

Yes. Our dedicated team of nutritionists work with our chef teams to create menus for those children that suffer with

allergies or require a special diet. A special diet is a requirement different to the choices offered within the menu cycle, which are medically required or due to religious beliefs. For medically required diets all requests are to be supported by a GP/ Dietician letter confirming the allergy, this enables our nutrition team to develop a suitable menu for your child.

## **My child is nervous about eating in the dining hall. I want to be able to reassure them by talking them through the dining hall experience. How does the dining hall work and who will my child be sitting with?**

The dining hall may be a daunting place for a new starter but there is nothing to be worried about! Children eat with their class mates and are led in to the dining hall by year group by a supervisor who will also make sure they get their meals and take it to their tables. Supervisory staff are also on hand to ensure the lunchtime is a safe and enjoyable experience.

## **My child is very particular about what they eat. Will my child be able to get a school meal they like? And what would happen if they do not like the meal they choose?**

Menus are available to parents to talk about daily food choices. Although all our schools are different we offer additional choices in most schools such as a jacket potato option, fresh fruit and yoghurt as a pudding alternative. Staff soon understand the likes and dislikes of pupils and help them make choices on a daily basis.

Our research shows that children will often try new foods when their friends are eating the same items, this often leads to pupils enjoying more foods leading to a wider and more varied diet. We also can offer taster pots for pupils to encourage them to try something new.

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Stay up to date with all the important news on your school meals service by visiting [www.loveschoolmeals.co.uk](http://www.loveschoolmeals.co.uk)

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*Get in touch*

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Look out for your local  
Chartwells office contact  
details on your school menu



  
**Chartwells**  
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