

From September, significant changes are happening to school food: cooking is back on the curriculum, every pupil in **Reception, year 1 and 2** will be eligible for free school meals and from January, new food standards are being introduced. These are three of the 16 actions in the School Food Plan, which aims to transform what children eat in schools and how they learn about food (see [www.schoolfoodplan.com](http://www.schoolfoodplan.com)).

Good food and good food culture has been shown to lead not only to healthier, happier and more fulfilled children, but to improved educational attainment. Evidence from those areas that already provide universal free school meals is that children eat more healthily and perform better academically in school. Schools in those areas have also reported improved behaviour and atmosphere as a result of all pupils eating together every day.

New standards for school food have recently been published and will come into force in January. By following them, we can be sure that our pupils will get the nutrition they need across the whole school day.

We believe that the school lunchtime is a great opportunity for all our children to sit down together and enjoy their healthy and tasty meal, while developing their social skills. We therefore hope that all parents will take up this offer of a free school meal for our infant pupils.

In a trial, it was found that pupils who ate a high quality school lunch achieved better academically than those who did not. They were also more likely to eat healthier foods such as vegetables at lunchtime instead of less healthy foods such as crisps. Parents in the trial appreciated saving the cost of school lunches (currently £2.05 per child per day) and not having to spend time preparing packed lunches.

As a school, we have a responsibility to help children learn to eat healthily. You will be aware of the increasing national concern about rising rates of obesity and related health problems for children. Furthermore, Children's Food Trust research shows that eating a healthy school meal in a pleasant environment helps children concentrate better in afternoon classes.

We've significantly improved our school meals which are now likely to be healthier than packed lunches. They include a cold option each day, vegetables, fruit, extra bread and healthier drinks, and they avoid confectionery and snacks that are often in packed lunches.

After talking with pupils, parents, governors and our school cooks, we have decided to introduce a policy for packed lunches, a copy of which is enclosed. We understand that while some pupils already have fairly healthy packed lunches, for others it will mean making significant changes to what's in your child's packed lunch.

We hope that all children will be taking advantage of the Universal Infant Free School Meals, if however your child does wish to change from school meals to packed lunch or vice versa, two weeks' notice in writing to the school office will be required in order to notify cook so she can adjust her ordering etc. All packed lunches will need to comply with the school's Healthy Packed Lunch Policy.

### **Registering for School Meals & Pupil Premium**

**We ask that ALL PARENTS in the school to fill in the Pupil Premium Registration Form.**

This is important so that we can continue to register pupils who are entitled to pupil premium, which is worth £1,300 a year per pupil for our school. If you have any questions, please contact Mr Kenny.

Even if you don't want your child to receive a free school meal we would ask you to complete this form so that school receives as much funding as possible to spend on your child's education.