

# Varna Community Primary School



## Dinner Money Policy

**Approved by:** Governing Body

**Date:** February 2024

**Last reviewed on:** November 22

**Next review due by:** February 2025

## Aims

- To outline the school's procedures regarding school meals
- To work with parents to provide a flexible approach to the lunchtime nutritional needs of our pupils
- To ensure the smooth, efficient and cost effective operation of the school dinner system
- To clarify the roles and responsibilities of school staff, parents and pupils
- To present a workable, fair mechanism for the collection of school dinner money.

## Key Information

1. The Headteacher and Governing Body believe that it is important that your child/ren have a healthy, nutritious school meal at lunchtime to provide him/her/them with the energy required to concentrate in class and cope with the demands of the day
2. Parents who don't want their child/ren to have a school lunch should provide a healthy packed lunch.
3. If a parent wishes their child/ren to change from school meals to packed lunches or vice versa this can all be done via Dolce catering online portal.

School meals are payable direct via Dolce Catering online portal where meals can be pre-ordered, paid for and balances can be checked. Any price changes are communicated by Dolce and a reminder sent by the school to parents/carers. Prices changes are normally effective from April each year.

Dolce Catering Meal Prices			
	Pupil paid	Nursery paid	Staff Paid
Current (from 1/4/23)	£ 2.46	£ 2.20	£ 2.41
New -effective from 1/4/24	£ 2.68	£ 2.40	£ 2.62

## Free School Meals

Refer to GOV.UK latest guidance -<https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

Which children qualify for them?

Your child may qualify if you have any of these incomes:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- the guaranteed part of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (as long as your annual gross income is £16,190 or less and you don't get Working Tax Credit)
- Working Tax Credit run-off after you come off Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit that you applied for on, or after, 1 April 2018. As long as your household income is less than £7,400 a year after tax, not including any benefits
- Your child may qualify if you are an asylum seeker.
- Children who are younger than the compulsory age for starting school but in full-time education, can also get free school meals.

## **How long can they get free school meals for?**

Children who are eligible for free school meals now will be eligible for them until either:

- they finish school; or
- if on 31 March 2023 they are still in school, until they finish the phase of schooling they are in (primary or secondary) –

whichever is sooner.

If you believe that your child/ren may qualify for entitlement to Free School Meals, please contact the office for more details. This allowance is a statutory right and it is important that you use it if you qualify. We will help you all we can with your application.

### **Apply Online**

You can also apply online by visiting: <https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims>

### **Meal Changes**

If you wish to change your child's meal arrangements, this can be done easily and quickly on a day-to-day basis via Dolce Catering online system.

### **Infant free school meals in England**

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 can get free school meals whatever your income. But if you have one of the qualifying incomes (above) it will help the school if you tell them this, so they can get extra funding.

### **Allergies**

If your child has an allergy to specific food this must be notified on the pupil starter pack prior to admission. Any changes must be notified in writing to the school office immediately.

Parents/carers should also note any allergy on the Dolce meals portal on pupil meal account.

### **Procedure for the collection of school meal arrears**

Debts are handled by Dolce Catering, however, once over three days' meals owed this is then passed onto the school and any further debts incurred will be charged directly to the school. Once debts go above this level, this may be referred to Manchester City Council Legal team for recovery and you may be asked to provide a packed lunch until the matter is rectified.