



Blackshaw Lane Primary & Nursery School

School Meals Policy

Blackshaw Lane Primary & Nursery School uses the Oldham Catering Service for the preparation of school meals, which are prepared daily on site. The variety of meals offered provides a balanced, healthy diet and is good value for money. There is always a good choice of meals including a range of hot options and a salad bar. Water is provided as a drink with the school lunch.

Children in Reception to Year 6 may either have a cooked meal in school or bring packed lunches. (Children in Nursery are required to bring a packed lunch).

During lunchtime, children are supervised by Midday Supervisors and other members of staff. Outdoor activities are also led by sport coaches, who all have Enhanced DBS clearance.

Free School Meals (FSM)

Schools receive extra money to support each child who is eligible to receive a free school meal. Therefore, it is important that parents claim the eligibility for free school meals to make sure Blackshaw Lane receives the funding to which children are entitled.

To Apply

You need to apply online by visiting www.oldham.gov.uk and searching Free School Meals to access the online application form.

You do not need to re-apply for Free School Meals every year unless your circumstances change.

Eligibility

You can apply for Free School Meals if:

- 1) Your child attends a school maintained by a local education authority and you and your child live in the Oldham borough. (If you do not live in Oldham and your child attends a local authority maintained school in Oldham please contact your local council for advice).
- 2) You receive any of the following:
 - Income Support (IS)
 - Income-based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
 - An income-related employment and support allowance
 - Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - Child Tax Credit (provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) that does not exceed the current year's level
 - The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

- Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after your employment finished, or after you start to work less than 16 hours per week
- Universal Credit.

Additionally:

- You, as the parent or guardian, must receive Child Benefit for the child you are responsible for.
- Children who receive IS or IBJSA in their own right are also entitled to receive free school meals.
- Children who receive “education suitable for children who have not attained compulsory school age” (i.e. nursery children) will still need to satisfy the additional requirement of “receiving education both before and after the lunch period”, before being eligible to receive free school meals.

If your circumstances change

If you or your child’s circumstances change, Free School Meals may be withdrawn, the most common reasons include:

- The parent or guardian ceases to receive a qualifying benefit
- The child leaves school
- The family move out of the borough
- The child switches to packed lunches (long term)
- The child is absent from school for a long period of time

All changes of circumstance must be reported by the claimant (schools can also report changes of circumstance).

For further information please contact Customer Services at the Civic Centre on 0161 770 6688 or email: benefits@oldham.gov.uk

Universal Infant Free School Meal (UIFSM)

In September 2014, the Universal Free School Lunch became available to Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. This is not to be confused with Free School Meals eligibility. Parents need to continue to claim their Entitlement to Free School Meals so that Blackshaw Lane School receives the correct amount of **school budget funding**.

Paid School Meals

The cost of a school pupil meal is currently £2.10 per day and £2.80 for a staff meal. Blackshaw Lane School operates an online payment system through ParentPay. Parents and staff receive an ID and Activation Code from school to activate/access the system. Schools meals should be paid weekly in advance for up to one month.

Cash is also collected weekly and should be placed in an envelope clearly marked with the children's name, class, amount enclosed and handed at the main school office.

We offer: 5 day option (Monday - Friday) or
 3 day option (Monday/Wednesday/Friday school dinner and Tuesday & Thursday packed lunch).

If you wish to change your child's school meal arrangements please notify the main school office in writing and in advance so that your account can be changed accordingly.

If a parent wishes to change the meal pattern for their child, one week's notice must be given to the main school office. This is because the kitchen staff place food stock orders in advance to enable adequate planning and preparation of school meals.

School Meal Arrears

Once 5 meals have been eaten and not paid for, a child will be in school meal arrears.

School meal arrears are not allowed to escalate. If a pupil has school meal arrears of more than 10 meals, the school may request the parent to provide packed lunches until the arrears are paid in full and the matter resolved.

The escalation process for the collection of debt is as follows:

1. School meal arrears equates to 5 meals –
ACTION: School meal payment reminder sent via ParentPay e-mail, text or letter and/or telephone call to parent.
2. School meal arrears equates to 10 meals –
ACTION: Telephone call and standard letter to parent to resolve the issue. If arrears remain unpaid, parent requested to provide packed lunches until debt cleared.

In the event of the debt remaining **unresolved**:

- a. Headteacher and Chair of Governors are notified.
- b. Matter referred to Legal Department - OMBC Debt Recovery.

School will make every effort to support families who are experiencing difficulties in paying arrears, working in partnership to secure a positive outcome in the interest of the pupils.

Policy produced by:

School Business Manager

Date adopted by the governing body:

11th October 2017

Review date:

October 2019