



LOVE SCHOOL MEALS

**ALL YOU NEED
TO KNOW ABOUT
SCHOOL MEALS**



SO MUCH MORE THAN FANTASTIC FOOD

As leading primary school caterers, we're dedicated to going the extra mile. We know how important it is to get children excited about food and its role in social interaction, health and wellbeing, whilst educating and encouraging them to develop positive relationships with nourishing food to live healthier, stronger lives.

Our menus and concepts make it fun for pupils, with multi-sensory themed days throughout the year that encourage pupils to try something new. We know that food is much more than a combination of ingredients; it's an experience, and one that we're proud to help primary school pupils associate with fun.

At Chartwells Schools, we create lifelong memorable moments by providing wholesome nourishment and exceptional learning at 1,800 schools across the country.

We believe that the key to fueling young minds comes from understanding both what they need and what they enjoy, which is why we develop nutritious and delicious food that pupils love, alongside helping to ensure a healthy body and mind.

We're committed to making nutritional food accessible to every pupil, which is a core value of our fantastic teams across every primary school we work in. We create delicious menus which are healthy for pupils and the planet. As part of our journey to be net zero by 2030, we have developed menus centred around local and seasonal ingredients and have recently banned air freight of fresh fruit and vegetable produce to enhance the focus on British seasonality. We carefully select ingredients that we know pupils will love to reduce waste and build a more sustainable world.

WHO ARE CHARTWELLS?



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! 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.

Save
£400 in
2022
on average

FOOD SAFETY AND ALLERGENS

At Chartwells, the safety of the pupils we cater for is our number one priority. We understand the importance of ensuring that pupils with medical diets can continue to enjoy a safe, balanced meal alongside their peers. As such, the Chartwells medical diet policy has been developed specifically for the school kitchen environment which enables us to cater to as many children as possible, as safely as possible. Chartwells have a dedicated team of Medical Diet Nutritionists who are available all year round to support with medical diet menus. The team continually deliver medical diet training to our kitchen teams, school staff and also children to promote allergen awareness. If you would like a copy of our medical diet policy or have any questions please contact us at chartwells.medicaldiets@compass-group.co.uk.



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!

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 Government School Food Standards. 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 a range of delicious desserts.

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

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, Year 1 or Year 2, 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.

What is included in a school meal?

Each school meal consists of a protein item (either meat, fish or vegetarian options), two 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.

Whether you'd like to discuss how our school and education catering experiences could inspire your pupils or students, or you're interested in partnering with our brilliant teams across the UK, please don't hesitate to get in touch. We're always happy to help! For all other enquiries, please visit our contact page.

