



20 September 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) – Census Day

Thursday 06 October 2022 is School Census Day. This day provides important information for the Department for Education (DfE) to help them plan for the future and, most importantly, to set future school budgets.

One element we have to report is the number of Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children who received a hot meal (UIFSM) on this day. It is important to remember that **all pupils in these year groups are entitled to UIFSM at no parental cost**. The Census data is then used to decide how much funding for the year we get for our hot meals based on the number of pupils who received a meal on this day.

This system creates a difficult situation that we need to manage effectively to prevent over spending on our hot school meals budget. You may or may not be aware that we do not receive funding for the amount of hot meals we order daily over the academic year but this is based upon the number of meals eaten on the two census days in October and January each year only.

For example, if only 100 children have a hot meal on the Census Days then we are funded by the DfE for the remainder of the academic year based on these figures only. If throughout the course of the academic year the total of meals ordered is above 100, as an example, we are not funded for these meals and the cost would be borne by the school and potentially could affect other budgets that are crucial in providing learning opportunities for your child.

Our solution to this is we would like to offer every child in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 the chance to try a hot meal on Census Day. The menu is:

Hot Main Dish - Tuna and Broccoli Ragù with Rice
Vegetarian Dish - Savoury Vegetable Mince with Rice
Alternative Dish - Jacket Potato with Baked Beans

Please do continue to order your meals via <https://dorset.mealsector.co.uk>. If you have not signed up to this before, it is a really easy process and will take you no more than two minutes. **The cut-off points for placing meal orders or making changes is midnight on Sunday 25 September 2022.** We will order extra meals split between Meat and Vegetarian, so if anyone changes their mind about trying a hot meal, the option is still there for this day only.

We would like all parents to see this as an opportunity for their child to try hot meals, which are free, highly nutritious and could save you time in the morning. There is also proven benefits for children's concentration and learning in the afternoon.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to let us know.

Yours sincerely

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