



Bishop John Robinson CE Primary School

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Dear Parents and Carers

The Impact of School Meals on Children's Education

A recent study by the Society of Neuroscience has revealed that diets with high levels of saturated fats often impair learning and memory. Many of the popular items often seen in packed lunches contain high quantities of caffeine, sugars, chemicals and sodium, all of which can leave children with a post-food crash where they can become jittery and unfocused, experience low mood levels and experience a lack of energy and motivation.

Having a nutritious school dinner can ensure children have a broad and healthy diet which had been shown to support children's social and academic development. Research has shown that when children have a balanced and nutritious diet, they perform better at school.

Currently, if your child is in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2, they automatically qualify for the Government funded scheme known as Universal Free School Meals which is not means tested. However, unless your family qualifies for the means tested benefit of Free School Meals, the cost for school dinners begins in Year 3. That means for the average child at BJR from Year 3 until the end of Year 6, parents could be paying nearly £2,000 in school dinner fees!

We recognise that during the current pandemic many of our families' situations have changed. Even if your child is currently receiving Universal Free School Meals, you may still qualify for the means tested benefit of Free School Meals. Once eligible, your child remains so for the next 6 academic years. You can check, for free, at the following address: www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals. Once you've entered your postcode, the website will direct you to the Local Authority page, where you can download a copy of the application form.

Alternatively, if you would like a paper copy of the application form, please contact the school office and your request will be dealt with as soon as possible. All information is dealt with in the strictest confidence.

We will also be offering free vouchers of food packs to anyone that is claiming the means tested Free School Meals during the Christmas holidays.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me via the school office

Yours faithfully

Mr M E Harris
Headteacher