



# The Two Way Street

You may already be aware that Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg has announced plans to provide a free school lunch for every child in Reception, Years 1 and 2 from September 2014 if they attend a state-funded infant school.



The aim is to improve academic attainment and save families money - over the course of a year the average family spends £437 on school lunches per child.

Universal free school meals for primary school pupils were a key recommendation in a recent review of school food, produced independently for the Department for Education. The review found that, in pilots where all children have been given a free school dinner, students were academically months ahead of their peers elsewhere and more likely to eat vegetables at lunchtime instead of less healthy food like crisps



Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg said:

"My ambition is that every primary school pupil should be able to sit down to a hot, healthy lunch with their class mates every day."

In pilot areas:

- students were found to be on average 2 months ahead of their peers elsewhere
- around 2% more children reached target levels in Maths and English at Key Stage 1; while at Key Stage 2 the impact on achievement of between 3% and 5% was a bigger improvement than the 3.6% boost that followed the introduction of a compulsory literacy hour in 1998
- academic improvements were most marked among children from less affluent families
- there was a 23% increase in the number of children eating vegetables at lunch and an 18% drop in those eating crisps

# Your Questions and Answers

I have one child in Reception and one in the juniors. If my youngest has a free meal, can I still pay for the older one to have a hot meal?

Yes of course you can! Government are currently thinking that the cost of this high quality meal will be set at £2.30 per child. This has not yet been confirmed.

I do not want my child to have a free school meal in September. Can he continue bringing in sandwiches?

My child is in year 5 and is entitled to free dinners anyway - will this continue?

This will not change!

Yes, your child does not have to take up the free meal offer. If you prefer him to have a packed lunch that is fine - just remember to make it a healthy option!

On April 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, it is parents evening! After your appointment, we will be asking you some questions in the Reception area regarding your child/children and school meals. We will be providing a few light refreshments (and a little tippie if required!) as a thank you for spending a few minutes talking with us. We need as much information as we can so that we can make plans to cater for any increased uptake in school dinners. We hope that you will be able to support us in obtaining this information.

If you have any comments, concerns or questions - why don't you email us on our address specifically for the 'Two Way Street'

**Email address:**

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Information supplied by **St John's C E Primary School**

