



Billingshurst Primary School
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Dear Parents and Carers

Census Day Hot Dinners

Next Thursday, 19th January, is another School Census Day. This is a when the Department of Education collects information about each school to help them plan for the future and, most importantly, set the school budget. One of the figures we have to report is the number of Reception and Key Stage children who are having a school hot meal on this day.

This data is then used to decide how much funding we get for our hot meals, however the amount we actually have to pay for the school meals depends on how many we order which is difficult to predict as we don't know in advance how many children will bring in packed lunches on any particular day. In very simple terms, if 200 children have a hot meal on Census Day and we order 210 meals, we have to pay for an extra 10 meals that we are not funded for, which reduces the amount we have to pay for classroom resources, support etc. Over the course of a year, those 10 extra meals would cost the school more than £4,000. We could of course, just order 200 meals but the risk then is that we may have more children than we expected having a hot meal and so there may not be enough to go round.

Our solution to this problem, as in October, is to ask every child in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 to try the hot meal on Census Day. All children will be given a hot meal in the dining halls but if you really feel that your child will not eat anything (though you may be surprised what they may try if they see their friends eating it), then they can have their packed lunch once they get back to the classroom. We would like to encourage all parents to see this as an opportunity for their child to try hot meals which are after all free, highly nutritious, much quicker in the mornings than packed lunches and have proven benefits for children's learning in the afternoon.

We had a very positive response to this initiative in October and hope that you will support us again this term. If all children, in Reception, Year 1 and 2, have a hot meal on Thursday, we will be funded so that there will be no additional cost to the school and we will have enough meals for every child that wants one. In these times of extremely tight budgets this is vitally important.

We thank you for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully

Helen Williamson
Headteacher

The Menu for Thursday 19th January will be:

Main Course

**Sausages and Mash with Gravy
Garden Peas or Salad**

Dessert

Chocolate Shortbread

