

29th August 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Meal price rises September 2023

Our aim as a leading school food provider is to deliver great food at affordable prices for our pupils and parents.

The cost-of-living crisis continues which we are all experiencing in our own lives, with prices in supermarkets and other daily costs rising almost weekly. This has in turn impacted the prices we pay for food and the wages we pay our teams.

I wanted to write to you to let you know what we are doing to try to limit the impact on students and parents. There are two issues which the food industry is needing to deal with:

1. Food inflation at 19.2% (March 2023)
2. Staff wage increases 9.7%

Food inflation

As we witness in our day to day lives, we are all wrestling with food inflation, and we are not immune from this. Input costs to producers, distributors and framers are higher than ever before. This is predominantly driven by the war in Ukraine, which is not only a terrible humanitarian crisis, but has also created food instability. Official figures show food and drink inflation reached 19.1% in March, far above the headline rate of 10.1% for the increase in the cost of an average basket of goods and services.

Staff wage increases

The Government has increased the minimum wage by 9.7%. This is a positive move that will mean our teams are better able to address the cost pressures they are under.

This is more than 3% higher than last year's record rise, so great progress but clearly creates its own challenge from a funding perspective. Our ability to attract staff into our schools is reliant on paying an attractive wage that is competitive in the local market, and whilst we have invested in other benefits, we know that an attractive hourly rate will be the first area prospective team members look for, and what keeps our loyal teams in post.

To address these cost increases we must raise the prices we charge in our school dining areas.

We have looked at all options to minimize the increases such as changes to suppliers, menu engineering and adding some new product lines. But we must not allow these pressures to impact the quality of the food, nor the portion sizes we provide.

We are therefore implementing a tariff increase of **10%** from September 2023 on all cash purchases. I have attached the new price list of all the items that we currently sell.



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As your trusted partner, we continue to face these headwinds and must unfortunately take these necessary steps. And I personally give you my commitment to continue to serve food of the highest quality, that represents good value for our pupils, parents, and schools

We look forward to our continued partnership providing value, with healthy and nutritious meals for all children to enjoy. If you have any questions, then please speak with your local account management team who will be able to answer any queries you may have.

Yours sincerely,

Paula Addison
Area Manager

Tel:07860635219



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