



Year 7 Welcome Pack 2021-22

Catering and Smartcards

The canteen is open for breakfast at 8 - 8:30am; break 10:45 - 11am and lunch time 12:45 – 1:25pm.

The smart card is a swipe card and it is the only way to purchase food in the canteen. Money can be pre-loaded onto student smart cards via ParentMail or the cash loader in the canteen. This helps reduce queues at the tills and ensures that money is spent on school meals and not elsewhere. Healthy eating is important to us, therefore all food sold in the canteen is prepared daily on site using fresh ingredients. This includes all of our cakes and treats. Our water is carbonated and flavoured with natural fruit juice. Crisps that are sold, are baked and under 100 calories.

A maximum daily spend limit can also be set to control how much can be spent in one day. Pupils must remember that items purchased at breakfast or at break, count as part of their daily limit. The default limit is £5 per day. Once daily limits or food restrictions are in place they cannot be changed without an email or phone call from a parent or carer to the Canteen Manager, Mrs Barford, via admin@verulam.herts.sch.uk. It is a good idea to pay **£30.00** to top up your child's card prior to him starting school in September.

Loading money on to the smart card.

Our preferred method is online payment via ParentMail.

Online - ParentMail

During the last week of August, you will be able to pay for your son's meals online and this is encouraged by the school as a direct way of paying for your son's meals once the Autumn Term has started. To load money onto your child's smart card please go to ParentMail, click on Menu, then accounts and click on dinner topup. Please also note that online ParentMail payments are allocated daily at 10.00am. Parents using the system are encouraged to load the payment the evening before. There is no guarantee that a payment put through the system after 10.00am will be allocated until the following day. Once money has been loaded onto a smartcard by any payment method, please note it cannot be taken off the catering account to get cash.

Cash

A Cashloader machine is located in the canteen. If you were unable to top up your son's dinner money online, then he can bring in cash which he will be able to upload onto his Smartcard.

Cheques

As a last resort, cheques can be made payable to **ABM Catering**, with your son's name, form and lunch written on the back and taken to Mrs Barford, Canteen Manager. Cheques can take up to 24 hours to be processed.

What to do if cards are damaged or lost

Smart cards need to be brought into school every day and should be kept in the pupil's possession at all times. Cards must be shown to gain entry to the canteen. Any cards which are defaced or damaged will need to be replaced by the pupil at a cost of £5. Any lost cards must be reported immediately to Mrs Bailey in Reprographics. Once a card is reported lost, it can be deactivated until found or replaced. If your child forgets his card and needs to gain entry to the canteen, he may obtain a one-day temporary card from Mrs Bailey, Reprographics. Temporary cards can be obtained at break time only.

Free School Meal Allowance

If you feel your child may be entitled to free school meals or have any queries, please contact Hertfordshire County Council Financial Help Section on 0300 1234 048 or apply online: website www.hertsdirect.org/freeschoolmeals. As soon as the relevant processes have been completed by parents/carers with the local authority and the school has been notified, then the free school meal allowance will automatically be credited to the pupil's smart card on a daily basis. Any unused meal allowance will be returned to HCC and does not accumulate on the pupil's account. If your child needs more than the current allowance of £2.30, then extra money from home can be added to their account by using ParentMail once term has started.

Your son will be given his Smartcard on his first day in September.