

21 January 2010

Dear Parents

### **School Meals**

Peterborough City Catering have been providing our lunchtime meal service, as they have to most of the primary schools in Peterborough. The current arrangement with schools is that we are billed in arrears for the number of meals we have served each month. However this arrangement has meant that Peterborough City Catering has not been able to meet all its costs and has relied on Peterborough City Council paying the deficit in order to maintain the service. Last year the deficit was in the region of £210,000.

Peterborough City Council have decided that they are no longer going to subsidise the costs of the meal service which means that as from April 2010 all costs will be passed onto schools. These costs include the catering staff's salary costs, consumables used in the kitchen, a payment towards the running of the service as well as food costs. This will inevitably mean a large increase in the cost of school dinners. It is not possible at present to calculate exactly how much a school dinner would cost from April but a meal would certainly cost at least three pounds.

I have attended two meetings in the last week with other headteachers to discuss the implication of this change in policy for school and the governing body have met to discuss the options available to us.

The governors and I share the view that we should endeavour to continue to offer a hot meal to the children each day. We are also of the opinion that parents will probably not be happy about such a large price increase and that, as a result, children may stop having a school meal and bring sandwiches instead. The result of this would be an even larger increase in price for those who continued to have a hot meal.

We need to make a decision fairly swiftly as to whether we should stay with Peterborough City Catering or not. Our immediate course of action is to investigate other potential providers of school meals. We have a couple of avenues to explore but if any parent knows of any company who might be able to provide a good quality meal that would meet the government's

nutritional standards at a reasonable price, we would be very interested to hear from you.

We would also welcome parents' thoughts on the cost of school meals. Would you be happy to pay £3.00 for a school lunch? If not, what would you consider to be a reasonable price to pay? This information will be taken into consideration when making a decision. Please use the space at the end of this letter to record your views and return this to school as soon as possible.

Many thanks for your help with this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mrs K Hepworth-Lavery  
Headteacher

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To: **Heritage Park Primary School** – please return slip as soon as possible

**School Meals**

Would you be happy to pay £3.00 for a meal?      Yes        No   

If No, what do you consider to be a reasonable price to pay for a meal?    £.....

We should be grateful to hear your views on school meals (these will be taken into consideration when we make our decision):

Signed (optional): ..... (parent)