

Our ref: PS/LE

Please ask for: Pauline Sharratt

Direct line: 01384 814200

14 February 2014

To all Headteachers

Dear Colleagues

Changes to Catering Charges for 2014/15

The effects of Pay and Grading implemented in April 2012 were significant to catering staff with an increase on hourly rates and the introduction of incremental pay scales.

The increase in salary costs have been funded by the Council during the financial years 2012/13 and 2013/14. Coupled with Catering and Client Services in house efficiency savings this has resulted in no schools seeing an increase in their catering charge since April 2012. However from 2014/15 full cost recovery of pay and grading is required from the traded service.

What this means to schools

Individual schools are charged on an actual performance related basis. Charges are determined each year by projecting income and expenditure whilst also allowing for an increase in line with inflation. However for the next financial year charges will increase in excess of inflation and this information will be detailed on the traded service take up pro forma which will be issued shortly for 2014/15.

To minimise the impact directly on schools a number of measures have been introduced to assist schools:

1. Pupil meal price increase from 28 April from £1.90 to £2.00
2. Some restructuring of the Department to reduce salary cost
3. Financial support from the Interim Director of Children's Services via the Dedicated Schools Grant. £1m is being made available to Dudley Schools over a 2 year period. The value of the financial support will equate to approximately 80% of the increased

catering costs to each school for 2014/15 and 40% of the increased cost for 2015/16. Further details will be issued in the next Budget Fact Sheet together with the allocation for each school and the method of payment.

At this stage Universal Infant Free Schools Meals from September 2014 have not been factored in. We are now aware that the allocation for these meals will be £2.30 for each meal based on actual take-up by newly eligible infant pupils which will be measured in the Schools Census from October 2014. Work is underway with a small task group and a briefing session is to be arranged during March with all primary school headteachers.

During the summer term (April – July) individual schools will be contacted to arrange meetings to discuss the details of their particular charge. However we wish to reassure you of our full commitment to ensuring the best possible value for money catering service for your school.

Yours sincerely



Pauline Sharratt
Interim Director of Children's Services