

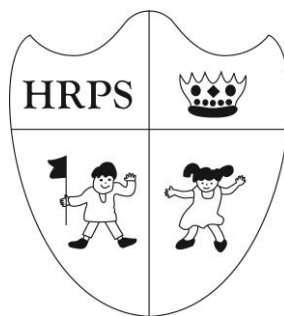
Houghton Regis

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Primary School

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10 March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I am delighted to announce the appointment of HCL (Herts Catering Limited) as the new school meals provider for our school.

I have had very positive experiences working with HCL over a twenty year period. All the schools I have worked in and led have used HCL as their catering provider due to the excellent service, high quality, healthy and child friendly food and well put together menus. At my most recent previous school once the contract was moved to HCL from another provider, the percentage of pupils taking school meals raised from around 50% to over 95%. My own children's school also use HCL and have been very happy with the service offered. I am therefore very secure in my belief that the quality of school meals will greatly improve at Houghton Regis for the benefit of our pupils. Our governing board considered proposals from a range of providers and HCL were the clear winner for a range of reasons.

HCL will be providing the school meals from after the Easter holidays. From this point pupils will go in their bubbles to collect their schools meals and then bring them back to their bubble classrooms. This will allow us to offer the full pupils' choice menu to all pupils. Only one bubble will collect their food at a time and the hatch will be cleaned between bubbles. This system is successfully working in a large number of HCL's other schools.

After discussion with some of our governors during the recent risk assessment for Covid 19 I would like to ask all parents of pupils in Reception and KS1 to take up the offer of a free universal school meal. **The meals are provided free of charge to parents for all pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.** We feel that this will both lower the risk of Covid 19 transmission as there will be fewer lunch boxes coming in and out of the school and give all lower school children an opportunity to experience the new, high quality school meals on offer. I also hope that more of our KS2 and Nursery pupils will try the new menu. The cost of KS2 meals will be £2.40 and Nursery meals £2.20. KS2 portion sizes are generous and this is why the cost is slightly higher.

Please note if your child has previously been reluctant to try school meals HCL are particularly good at providing food for 'fussy eaters'. Parents at other schools have often commented on how helpful their child trying different food is in supporting their development, making meal times at home far easier. As HCL have been providing school meals since the 1940s they are very well versed in understanding what young children culinary needs are. The sample menu and a welcome letter from HCL will follow separately.

If you have any questions around HCL or our request for all Reception and KS1 pupils to take up school meals please contact either Mrs Jones (Business Manager) or Mrs Brooke (School Administrator) in the school office.

Yours sincerely

James Edwards

Mr J Edwards
Headteacher

