



Free School Meal Allowance 2026/27

The Free School Meal Allowance is given to any eligible young person at Coombe Dean School and is an allowance of **£3.20 per day**.

Within Coombe Dean School, and all other schools, it is a minimum expectation that we provide school meals that meet good healthy eating standards. All food served here must meet a minimum standard which complies with the school food standards, so that children have access to a healthy and well-balanced diet.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What Free School Meal (FSM) Allowance does my child receive –

At Coombe Dean School they will receive a daily allowance of £3.20 per student.

2. What can my child buy for their £3.20 FSM Allowance?

There are three meal deal options that are covered by the daily allowance:

- a. Main Meal & Basic Cake (served at Break 2 only)
- b. Grab Bag (includes sandwich, crisps, piece of fruit and small bottle of water)
- c. Small Hot Pasta Pot & Basic Cake

Along with these options, is the ability to choose any of the other individually priced items from the menu, up to the value of £3.20. It must be stressed that as a school, we cannot dictate what our young people may choose, but are always here to guide them with their choices and sensible spending. A copy of our Menus and Price Lists are available from the School Website and can be downloaded to support your budgeting.

3. Can my child build up their daily allowance for a bigger spend on another day?

The short answer to this is **'No'**. It is a daily allowance so cannot be carried forward.

However, parents can add additional funds to their child's ParentPay account, for them to purchase additional items, such as a snack or drink. Tap water is always available free of charge. These additional funds will then be balanced against their spend, after the FSM allowance has been deducted from the daily total.



4. Can I place restrictions on my child's account to prevent overspending?

Yes. As a school we set an overspending cap at £7.50 per student. This means, if you forget to top-up your child's account or they have forgotten their lunch, they will still be able to purchase lunch. If you do not want them to overspend, or would like a lower overspend cap or daily spend limit on your child's account, please email finance@coombedean.co.uk.

5. Can I see what food my child has purchased?

Yes, you can see this information in ParentPay. Once logged in, from the home page click on 'Transaction history' on the left-hand side and then click on 'Balance history'. Here you can select your child's name, the payment item 'Dinner money for Coombe Dean School' and the month to view. On the report you can then click on the description link, and it will display what items have been purchased during that week.

If you need assistance using ParentPay, please contact the Finance Team at finance@coombedean.co.uk.

If you have any further questions, please contact our Catering Manager, Mr Lovell by email at slovell@coombedean.co.uk, who is always here to support your child whilst they are at Coombe Dean School.

If you think you may be eligible for free school meals, parents should apply through the Devon Citizen Portal, which is the quickest and easiest way to apply and will result in you getting an instant decision.

More information can be found here:

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/children-families-education/education/school-meals/applying-for-free-school-meals/>