



Spalding Parish Church of England Day School

21st April 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

COVID 19 – Weekly Food Parcels

Over the last month, as a school, we have continued to support our families through this difficult time. Our staff have continued to offer the best provision and support they can and they continue to do so – I would like to say a huge thank you to all of them for their support during this challenging period. I would also like to say thank you to all of you for your ongoing support. This is obviously a challenging and uncertain time for all of us and whilst it has not been easy, we have continued to support our parents and families during this time. We remain open to support our key worker and most vulnerable families, have sent learning projects out fortnightly to over 500 pupils, are communicating regularly with families and children via Twitter and email with regular letters to parents to keep you informed.

Throughout this period we have continued to provide weekly food parcels, currently funded out of the school budget, for families in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM), with provisions to provide a lunch for your child for 5 days. We have tried to vary the packs each week to offer some variety despite the fact that nationally provisions are in short supply. Each week the packs have included a loaf of bread, sandwich filling, butter, five pieces of fruit and five treats (so far this has included brownies, cookies, carrot cake, and currently chocolate bars to allow for some variation) to allow for a sandwich, a piece of fruit and a sweet treat each day. In addition to this, however, the packs have also included additional items each week to supplement so children do not necessarily need to have sandwiches each day. One week that was a tin of beans for beans on toast, another week we sent pasta and pasta sauce, this week we sent jacket potatoes with cheese. Packs also include soup each week so children could also have soup and bread one day as an alternative.

We are fully aware that a small number of parents are unhappy about the food packs, feeling the provisions are not sufficient to provide lunch each day. However, despite a member of SLT being on site each day when packs are collected, no concerns have been raised with school other than one in the first week in relation to the 50/50 bread provided that week (this has now been changed to white). This week the packs included a loaf of bread, 5 butter portions, 4 slices of cheese, 2 portions of jam, 5 pieces of fruit and 5 biscuits whilst also including 1 packet of soup and 1 jacket potato. Children could have a sandwich each day, either cheese or jam, and then a piece of fruit and a sweet treat. If they fancied a change they could then have had soup and bread one day, with a piece of fruit and a sweet treat, or a jacket potato with cheese and a piece of fruit and a sweet treat.



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We are also aware that a small number of parents have expressed a preference for the vouchers that a number of the secondary schools are providing. Given the fact that the Free School Meal voucher scheme is an alternative available to schools **only** if current food suppliers are no longer able to support with this, we are following the recommended DfE guidance ([Full guidance is available here](#)) – see below for direct extract from the guidance.

In the first instance, we are encouraging schools to provide meals or food parcels through their current food provider. If this is not possible, schools can provide supermarket or shop vouchers to eligible families.

Our decision to continue to provide the food packs, which is fully supported by both the LAAT and the Local Authority, is not only to continue to support our local food supplier, although if we did not continue to support they could potentially fold which in turn would result in the loss of local jobs and could also have a direct impact on our school lunch provision on our return to school. Primarily it is to support our families in ensuring they have access to basic supplies where provisions may be short or difficult to access. This also allows us to continue to support our local community, particularly local businesses and local employment, during such unprecedented times.

We are fully aware that some of our families will have been significantly affected, during the current pandemic, in many ways. Economically, finances may have been affected, through reductions in hours, roles being furloughed, or simply trying to balance working hours with being able to care for children. That in itself is significant, without considering the emotional impact and the difficulties we all face not being able to see our families and loved ones, the impact of self isolation – we know many of our community are following the 12 week guidance – whilst trying to explain all of this to our children, particularly during a time when they should have been returning to school following the Easter break. All whilst trying to stay safe, remaining indoors and reducing the risk of the virus spreading. We can assure you that our decision making has considered all of these factors with our families and community our primary concern:

- 🏠 Providing food parcels to support those that need them with provisions for weekly lunches, including continuing this support during the Easter period before this was recommended by the Government;
- 🏠 Having the opportunity to check in with these families on a weekly basis, to see them, to check if they are ok and if there is anything further they need, anything else that we can do to help. For some families additional support has already been provided in a number of ways;
- 🏠 Reducing the need for parents/carers to leave the family home to shop for provisions for lunches reducing the risk for our families, for all of you. We all appreciate a trip to the shops currently is not ideal, particularly if you have to take children with you.

Thank you to those of you who have contacted us and asked for support, we are pleased to be able to help. We can only ask that if you do have any concerns, queries or need further support that you ask to speak to the SLT member on duty when collecting your food parcel or by contacting school via feedback@spaldingparish.lincs.sch.uk. This will allow concerns to be discussed and support to be given. Please do not continue to worry alone, we are here to help you. Take care, look after yourselves and your families and stay safe.

Kind Regards,
Diane Mulley
Head Teacher



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