



THE WELLS ACADEMY

Be Kind. Work Hard. Achieve Greatness

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20th May 2021

Dear Parent/Carers,

Information regarding Family Dining – September 2021 – Year 8 Students

Firstly, I would like to wish you well and thank you for your ongoing support over this challenging period. We are all extremely proud of our community for working together to continue to grow something special at The Wells Academy.

I am writing to you to inform you of the changes we are making to the Academy lunch time arrangements for the 2021/22 Academic year. The changes will impact the current Year 8's who will be Year 9 in September 2021.

The summary of the changes are as follows:

Current Year 8 students going into Year 9 will sit down to eat together for the whole 35-minute lunch time. Students will be given the choice of a 'hot meal of the day', sandwiches/paninis or wraps or packed lunch. If students decide to bring a packed lunch to school, this must consist of starchy foods such as; bread, rice, potatoes or pasta, protein foods like meat, fish, eggs or beans, a dairy item, like cheese or yoghurt, vegetables or salad and a portion of fruit. We do not allow students to bring fizzy drinks, energy drinks, large bags of crisps, sugary sweets or large bags of chocolate into school.

What is Family Dining?

In September 2021 we are introducing 'Family Dining' Year 9. Family Dining allows students to eat a healthy, hot meal provided by the Academy, whilst seated formally at a sit-down meal every day. Students will sit down to eat together for the whole 35-minute lunch time. Family dining will be part of our character education programme; family dining is known to improve social times in other successful secondary schools, and it is an important way of developing student's communication, confidence and social skills. Our focus will be on students developing successful life habits.

Students will attend family dining every lunch time Monday-Friday. Catering staff will use student voice to provide weekly menus to students and staff will be encouraged to eat with students where possible. Family dining will be an integral part of our school culture and community, and it is something we strongly believe will help our students in the future.

Rationale for changes to lunch times

At present the Academy has 3 lunch sittings and due to COVID students have been offered a hot meal once a week and the option of a cold meal on the other days. Students rarely sit down and eat together, and it is important to us that as of September 2021 students are able to eat a healthy hot meal every day, whilst developing essential life and social skills. Research strongly suggests that giving students the opportunity to take part in family dining enhances responsibility, communication, confidence and table manners.

The Academy believes the benefits for this change are as follows:

- All students will be able to enjoy a healthy, hot meal provided by the academy daily
- Students will not feel the need to rush their food



KINDNESS



RESILIENCE

GREATNESS



- Provide students and staff the opportunity to engage in conversation at lunch times; this can have considerable impact on students' economic prospects
- Enable students to build friendships with a variety of students in their year groups; many young adults find it difficult to interact in social contexts where eating formally is the norm
- Develop important life social skills

The Academy acknowledges that these changes will take away the opportunity for students to go outside during their lunch time. All students will still be able to access all outside facilities during their morning break and will be offered 2 hours of PE each week. The academy also has a range of extra-curricular clubs for your child to get involved with after school.

How will it work?

Students will continue to use their finger print or pin number to purchase their 'hot meal of the day', 'cold meal of the day' (which will be either a sandwich or a wrap) or students will be able to bring in their own packed lunch. Vegetarian options will be available every day. Lunch will continue to cost £2.10 and all meals will be served with a choice of dessert and water.

We will also be sending out a data collection form, it is essential that you check the data we have for your child is correct and that you update us with any dietary requirements (information will be on the data collection form of how to do this).

How to provide feedback

If you would like to provide feedback about family dining, please complete the following form:

<https://forms.office.com/r/4zQe7iu64i>

Alternatively, please contact Natalie Jones on njones@thewellsacademy.org expressing your feedback.

I would like to thank you all once again for your ongoing support.

Kind regards,



Mr Shepherd
Proud to be Principal of The Wells Academy

