

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2025

Dear parents and carers

Please find detailed further information regarding Hutchisons Catering at Ashlands from Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January.

### **Initial Parent Set Up in advance of Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January.**

Hutchisons uses an online system / App called *Appetite*. This allows parents/carers to pre-order meals and pay for meals and view nutritional information.

Further information about Appetite will be sent out later this week including a link for the primary guardian to create an account. We will send a message out in advance of this via Arbor, so you know to look out for it.

Please register your child on Appetite even if they are entitled to a free meal via the Universal Free School Meals (reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children) or free school meals on economic groups, as you still need to select their meal choice, Appetite will know not to expect a payment for these children.

Once registered you will be able to start ordering your child's meals from January onwards, menus will be displayed when you log onto the App.

The link is only valid for 24 hours. Don't worry if it expires, Appetite will send reminders to unregistered parents. *(Once implemented we will review the list of those who have not registered with a view to switching off the reminders. You can of course sign up at any time if you change your mind).*

Please note that Hutchisons will not be able to serve your child if you have not registered with them as they will not know any dietary requirements. In this instance the school office will contact you for advice.

### **Children with allergies and food intolerances.**

If your child requires a special menu due to allergens / food intolerances, then you will not be able to select these menu items when you pre-order. The kitchen team will see this information at the service point.

Attached is further information from Hutchisons about how they manage special diets and a form for you to complete and return. Please return the completed form to [nutrition@hutchisons.co.uk](mailto:nutrition@hutchisons.co.uk)

Hutchisons are nut and seed free, there is no change to our current school policies on this.

Please note that school cannot share any information we already have on Arbor, Hutchisons require this direct from the parent.

### **Children with dietary preferences**

The Hutchisons menus detail information such as vegan or vegetarian to allow you to make your menu choices with your child and school will input this information against your child's record.

### **What will happen with credit and debt on Arbor?**

- From the Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January, you will no longer pay for school dinners on Arbor.
- On Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December after lunch service the school office will run a report of dinner money balances.
- We will contact you if your account is in arrears and ask you to bring it back to zero.

- If you are in credit, we will give you the option of moving the money to Saplings, if applicable, or issue a refund.
- Current debt cannot be moved to your Appetite account and therefore we will require this settling on Arbor.

If you wish to speak to us about a payment plan, please contact the school office to arrange a meeting.

To help us with this process we ask that parents and carers review their child's account over the next 2 weeks.

### **How things will work at Ashlands from 6<sup>th</sup> January.**

- Parents can choose and pay for their child's meal and can do this up to 7 weeks in advance.
- You can order up to 8.45am on the day.
- If your child is ill, then you have up until 8.45am on the day to cancel their meal choice.
- At lunchtime there will be a screen at the servery. Your child will select their name, and this will tell them and the kitchen team their meal choice.
- Staff will be on hand to help all the children whilst we get used to the new system. The younger children (nursery – Year 2) are always supported by staff at the servery.
- Our kitchen team will be supported by the Hutchisons Implementation team during the first week of go live and Hutchisons staff will be on site all week.
- If your child has dietary requirements then Hutchisons will be available to speak to you if needed.
- During the first week there will be information sessions for parents. We will send more details before we break up.

### **Attached to this email is:**

- Information leaflets from Hutchisons on menus and free school meals.
- A letter / form to be completed for any children who have food allergies and intolerances.

We are very excited about welcoming Hutchisons to Ashlands. Hutchisons have a wealth of knowledge in school catering, and we are looking forward to working with them.

Their online ordering system will ensure that your child gets their meal choice and help us to better manage our ordering and food wastage.

The introduction of the allergen menus will further strengthen this critical area of the lunch service and give parents and children confidence in their meal choice.

If you have any questions, please contact the school office and we will do our best to help.

Ashlands Primary School