

Take a fresh look at delicious and nutritious school meals

Released: Tuesday 25 October, 2016

Parents and pupils are being encouraged to take a fresh look at the delicious and nutritious food on offer in Wolverhampton's schools during National School Meals Week 2016, which begins on Monday (31 October, 2016).

Tens of thousands of hot lunches are served to children and young people in the city every week – with around 12,000 pupils eligible for free or discounted meals.

The tasty menus have been developed with help from pupils, parents and school catering staff, and offer plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables, alongside popular favourites such as roast dinners, pasta, pizza, jacket potatoes, sausage and mash and hot puddings.

There are also vegetarian options every day, with dishes for special diets can be prepared by prior arrangement. In addition, secondary school pupils can choose from a range of light bites and sandwiches, cakes and drinks.

Throughout the year, catering staff also offer special menus to celebrate key events, such as Bonfire Night, Christmas, Chinese New Year, St George's Day and Diwali.

Councillor Claire Darke, the City of Wolverhampton Council's Cabinet Member for Education, said: "We are really proud of the school meals we serve up to thousands of local pupils every day.

"Our experienced catering staff produce meals which are very high quality and meet a wide range of dietary requirements. Above all, they are affordable, nutritious and delicious.

"School meals save parents the time, cost and effort of shopping for and creating healthy, varied and appealing packed lunches every day, and they can relax knowing their children are well fed and can relax and socialise with friends in a safe environment.

"Next week is National School Meals Week – so I'd urge parents whose sons or daughters don't have a school meal on a regular basis to take a look at the excellent fare on offer and contact their school to find out more."

All Key Stage 1 pupils in Wolverhampton – those in Reception and Year 1 and Year 2 – are eligible for a free lunch through the Government's Universal Infant Free School Meals scheme. Free milk may also be available to some children. Many children and young people in Years 3 and above – and nursery-aged children receiving full-time education – also receive free school meals if their families meet eligibility requirements.

Councillor Darke added: "Even if you are not eligible for free school meals, they offer excellent value for money."

To check out the primary and secondary school menus, which are offered on a three week rotating basis, please visit www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/catering. For more information on free school meals, please visit www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals.

Parents who already receive free schools meals because their children are in Key Stage 1, but also meet the additional eligibility requirements for them should ensure they have registered for free school meals as this will mean their school receives additional Pupil Premium funding from the Government.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1/ For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact Paul Brown, Communications Advisor, on 01902 555497 or email paul.brown@wolverhampton.gov.uk.

2/ The council's Catering Services team has a Food for Life mark for the standard of meals served up in its primary schools after meeting strict criteria including ensuring that at least 75% of dishes were freshly prepared, all meat is from farms which satisfy UK welfare standards and that menus cater for all dietary needs.

- **Issued by the City of Wolverhampton Council's Corporate Communications Team.**
- **For more information, please call 01902 555439.**
- **More news from the City of Wolverhampton Council is available at:**
 - www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/news
 - www.twitter.com/wolvescouncil
 - www.facebook.com/wolverhamptontoday
 - www.youtube.com/wolverhamptontoday