



CATERHAM
SCHOOL

Food Provision During Covid Restrictions

Frequently Asked Questions

What have been the main changes to meals at school as a result of COVID-19?

Catering is one of the areas of school life which has been most affected by the safety measures required by COVID-19. The first change is that we are not able to have self-service, either for food service or for cutlery. Pupils are also only allowed to sit on one side of the tables and have to sit with members of their bubble only. This has meant that we have had to set up the Wilberforce Hall as a second dining venue. This is used by First Year, Second Year and Fifth Year for lunch and by Beech Hanger for breakfast, tea and dinner during the week. The changes above have meant that we have had to change the menus to allow for fully served meals only within the space available. The same menus are served in the Refectory and the Wilberforce Hall.

What is on the menu for lunch each day?

Each day there is a choice of a meat/fish option and a vegetarian option with side dishes and either a jacket potato or pasta option with toppings. There is also bread & butter, salad pots, a main dessert, cold desserts, cut fruit pots and whole fruit. At present we can only offer bananas and satsumas as whole fruit for safety reasons.

Are the pots you use for salad and cut fruit reusable?

At the beginning of term, the only pots we could get were disposable however we have now been able to buy reusable pots and these are used for both salads and fruits.

What other safety measures are in place?

All pupils are required to use hand sanitiser on their way into breakfast, lunch & dinner and before they leave the dining rooms and also when going to the tuck shops. Pupils also wear face coverings whilst in the queue. The tables are all cleaned with sanitiser between uses by bubbles and windows are opened for ventilation. The catering team wear masks, gloves and aprons. Trays, cutlery and bread & butter are all handed to pupils by a member of staff. The catering team has also been split into three separate teams working in the refectory, Wilberforce Hall and Prep School. Staff supervising lunch wear face coverings and visors. All the extra measures mean that we need six more staff than would normally be the case.

How many meals do you prepare each day?

In senior school we do lunch for 1200 and breakfast, tea and dinner for 160 boarders and the staff looking after them.



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What snacks are available outside of mealtimes?

There are tuck shops at morning break for First Year to Fifth Year and the Concourse Café is open from 8am to 5.15pm. It is used by the Sixth Form as their tuck shop at morning break and is available for all year groups from 3.20pm each day. Free fresh fruit is available at all of these locations at morning break.

Do you cater for allergies and special diets?

We cater for all food allergies including gluten-free. We have vegetarian and vegan meals, and other special diets including those for pupils with particular medical needs.

My child is a fussy eater. How do you cater for people who do not like spicy or complicated foods?

At lunchtime, in addition to the meat/fish option and the vegetarian option, there is always a choice to have plain pasta with a sauce or a jacket potato with toppings. Where we have a spicy dish such as a chicken curry, we also have plain chicken available. Bread & butter, salads, puddings and fruits are also available daily. For dinner, boarders have the choice of three different main meals, one of which is always vegetarian, and there is always an option to have a plain pasta and sauce.

Why aren't there any water jugs in the dining rooms?

Water jugs can't be used because we can't have multiple pupils touching the same handle. Pupils' own water bottles can be filled in the Refectory and corridor by the Wilberforce Hall in addition to the bottle fill points opposite the Refectory, on the Eothen courtyard and in the Leathem foyer.

How do you check that food is thoroughly cooked?

All protein items (including meat, fish and dairy) are temperature checked to ensure they are properly cooked before being served.

How can parents see what is on the menu each day?

Menus are accessible via the school website. A link to the menu is also included in the weekly newsletter. Menus are updated at least each half term and more frequently if we see that a dish is not popular. Menus are on a three weekly cycle and across each week we seek to strike a balance with the types of food on offer. [Click here for the current menu.](#)

Do you cook different food for staff?

No, staff and pupils eat the same food at each meal.



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How do you get feedback from pupils on school food?

We have for a number of years run food councils. There is one for each year group from First Year to Upper Sixth Form and also one for each boarding house. Food Council representatives collect the views of pupils in their house/tutor group and share their thoughts directly with the Bursar and catering staff. These meetings are a really useful way for pupils to tell us what they like, what they don't like and any suggestions they may have. Menus are updated to reflect views wherever possible.

What should parents do if they have comments on school food?

I am always pleased to hear from parents with comments about school food. Food is such a personal matter that discussing an individual concern is the best way of being able to resolve it. Feedback from parents is also used when updating menus. My email address is on the food page of the website, you can contact me at angela.higgs@caterhamschool.co.uk