



# TORQUAY GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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HEADTEACHER: MS S FORSTER | FOUNDED 1915 | ACADEMY TRUST

17 December 2022

Dear Parents & Guardians

## School Catering

I am pleased to inform you that we are taking school catering back in-house when we return to school in January. We have listened to students and parents, and we are hearing that our current offering doesn't meet with their expectations so we have decided to take control of the catering provision so that we can enhance our service. This will be an evolving process and we will be looking for further student input and feedback from tasters before we alter the menu, but we are excited that we have this opportunity to make changes.

This decision to go 'in-house' has been made after many months of thought and discussion both with staff and Trustees ... and, of course, from conversations with our students. Student voice will be at the forefront when developing the improved service and we are really looking forward to engaging with the students next term and beyond.

## Pricing

As you will be aware from the media, over the last couple of years the food industry has experienced supply chain difficulties on a scale they have not witnessed before. We've not only seen the much-publicised staff shortages, but also rising costs as a direct result of increasing wages. On top of this there are a great many other pandemic and Brexit-related impacts including:

- Driver shortages and steep wage increases across transport roles
- National living wage and general wage increases
- Increasing fuel costs – both for transport and cooking
- Growth in general inflation
- Increase in packaging costs following increases in UK paper costs
- Increase in ingredient costs due to lack of availability following poor harvests

At TGGS we have maintained the prices for the last two years but are no longer able to do this if we are to deliver a sustainable food service. We have also been advised that there may be further 'out of contract exceptional price increases' in the next few weeks so it is a very uncertain time in the Catering industry.

We have done all we can to minimise price rises and have absorbed some of the inflated costs, but I am afraid that we do have to pass some of the increases on. Our revised prices, which will be effective when we return to school in January, will soon be published on the school website. We thank you for your understanding with this.

## Free School Meals

This is a timely opportunity to remind you about the Free School meal system. We appreciate that the pandemic has contributed to more financial difficulties for some families whose circumstances have changed for the worse, and that the provision of free school meals makes a real difference to some families.

The eligibility criteria for free school meals has changed since the roll-out of Universal Credit, but you should be able to easily check whether you are eligible using the calculator in this link [Apply for free school meals - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). Should you need any help with this then our Heads of Year are available (in term time) to offer support.

If you are eligible then you should apply through Torbay Council [Free school meals - Torbay Council](#).

We also offer a one-off payment of £50 for every child that is newly approved and other subsidies such as reduced rates on music tuition and help with the cost of some trips. Information about this can be found on our website in the 'useful information' section. [Information for Parents | Torquay Girls' Grammar School \(tggsacademy.org\)](#)

The daily free school meal allowance will increase in January to £2.55 which covers the cost of a 'Meal Deal' – either main meal of the day or jacket potato with two fillings, accompanied by the dessert of the day. This is a daily allowance and can be spent however your child chooses – doesn't have to be just main meal. You can also top up using ParentPay if you wish.

If you have any queries about the catering service please email [swallwork@tggsacademy.org](mailto:swallwork@tggsacademy.org).

We look forward to working with staff and students to further develop our catering provision in the New Year and to sharing the results of our labours in future communications.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. J. Forster', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Ms Sarah Forster BSc (Hons), PGCE, MA, NPQH**  
Headteacher  
Torquay Girls' Grammar School