

FOOD FOR FAMILIES



UPDATE : JULY 2023

THE LUNCH BUNCH SCHOOL HOLIDAY LUNCHES

It's summer and the School Summer Holidays are fast approaching. For many families this creates even more stresses and tensions. The children are at home. Those who are on State Benefits cease to receive the free School Dinner. Other families experience what we call the 'locust effect'! The fridge is always empty and the children are always asking for more food. So, having trialled this at the last Half Term we are preparing to launch our Lunch Bunch School Holiday Meals. The meals will be in a DIY form, and families will receive a Lunch Bag with the main ingredients to make 4 family lunches during the holiday weeks. The food will be in the form of loaves of bread with filling options, Toastie Bags for toasted sandwiches, a box of eggs and some cheese/ham for an omelette, a bag of pasta with a homemade tomato pasta sauce. These would be given with a Weekly Menu Sheet showing how the items could be used, and offering different ways of using the ingredients. It will be more expensive than our one-pot style family meals but it will start showing families how to manage their family budgets in a healthy and more sustainable way.

Morning Lesley, the Holiday Lunches worked fantastic! My children loved making the omelettes & toasties. Lovely idea, the ham was lovely too! I'd love them through the summer hols if that was an option. Thank you so much!

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When we started this project in February 2023 we really didn't know how things would turn out. Would there be a huge demand? Would it be viable? Would we be able to cope? Luckily we had a soft start, with numbers gradually increasing. We now regularly cook 150 portions of food, handed out free to 35 families. Having a look back, and checking out the figures, I realised that this week we had cooked **2222** portions of food.

The aim of Food For Families was to provide a one-pot style, easy to heat and eat by all the family. This generally means we are cooking x3 50 litres saucepans of food each week. The type of meals we have cooked are:

Mac n Ham, Pasta Bolognese, Chicken Curry & Rice, Chicken Supreme, Savoury Mince & New Potatoes, Beef Stew, Chilli Con Carne, Pork n Beans, Sausage Casserole.

...and, of course the hugely popular Broccoli Quiche, which received a tsunami of positive feedback from the families!



We are always grateful for help and food donations. Using Food Waste from local Supermarkets such as the Co-op and Morrisons helps in so many ways. We use most of the fruit and vegetables for the meals. But other food goes to several Breakfast Clubs, Elderly Soup Lunch Days and Emergency Meals to families referred to us by local Churches. Nothing gets wasted – even our vegetable peelings go to a (very fat) pig up the road!

We set off in Food For Families wanting to be able to give families more than just a tin of beans. We didn't want to be a Food Bank, instead choosing to help families by educating them in healthy food options as well. Recently the Greetland Allotments offered to give us surplus food from the Allotment holders. So we are now receiving bags of salad leaves, cucumbers, herbs, courgettes and soft fruit. The reaction from the families was very positive. We had lots of messages saying thank you, and telling us they were using the salad items in sandwiches, wraps and with Jacket Potatoes. Next a local lady approached us saying her family and neighbours had chickens and they couldn't use all the eggs, so would we like them? Of course we would – lovely free range hens eggs! Another family called to say could they donate rhubarb and soft fruit. Then another offering to give us strawberries and raspberries for jam. Yesterday we were clambering over walls and fences to collect Loganberries.

COLT ENTERPRISES AND FOOD FOR FAMILIES

This month we have some very exciting news. Following conversations and talks with Rusty Davies who heads up the COLT Enterprise project in Elland, we have been offered a room at the mill as a store room. Being able to have everything in one place, and easy to access is a huge bonus. It will give us space to sort food before despatching it to families. At the moment it is a bare room and we will be putting in shelving, freezers and fridges. COLT is a very forward looking charity and we are planning several joint ventures with COLT.



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