We know that this pandemic has caused unprecedented pressure and disruption for schools, families and children. For children who access free school meals we recognise the impact of not having access to these nutritious meals. Whilst not all schools in Waltham Forest choose WF Catering as their school meals provider, our team have been and are currently providing support and advice to all schools and academies in the borough to access vouchers for the families of children who are eligible for free school meals, rather than issuing food hampers which will be difficult to quality control. This is for a number of reasons, not least of all to reduce the spread of the virus in our borough through reducing the movement of people to deliver or collect food parcels but also in recognition of just how diverse our residents are.

Please speak to your child's school directly regarding the arrangement they have in place for pupils eligible for free school meals, as some schools may be choosing to provide hampers via their school meals provider.

The health of every child and young person in Waltham Forest is our utmost priority and absolutely none should go hungry. This is why our Public Health Department commissioned an independent audit into the quality of school meal provision across a random selection of Primary and Secondary schools in Autumn 2019.

It's also why we continue to run a not-for-profit, in-house school meals provision at a time when many other Councils have chosen to outsource to private providers or to exit the market completely. As most parents will know, meeting young people's taste tests whilst offering them nutritional meals is a challenging ask but we are proud of how WF Catering stands up to local competitors.

In the most recent audit on school food standards, WF Catering outperformed all private providers as well as schools who were choosing to deliver their school meals as an in-house provision. You can read more about the audit at
https://www.walthamforestcatering.co.uk/independent-audit