

School Dinners in the Sixties

The offer was remarkably consistent across the country - was there a school meals recipe book? Whether they were liked or loathed often depended on the cooking and the serving of the meals. Those first in the queue did best, since the food got cold and portion sizes shrank as the food ran out! We usually ate 10 to a table, with a prefect or staff member at the end.

Dinners No pizza, little pasta,

Cheese pie (a 3-inch square of soggy pastry topped with a bit of melted cheese- swimming in tinned tomato juice with one tomato and a dollop of mash)

Steak pie

Cottage pie

Three Pigs Pie (tinned sausage meat made by the Three Pigs Company)

Sliced meat with gravy - beef or pork, never chicken (except perhaps at Christmas)

Lamb hotpot

Minced beef

Rissoles

Spam fritters

Corned beef hash

Beef stew with carrots

Heart slices (with small holes in for the arteries and veins - yuk!)

Liver (ox-liver so normally pretty tough)

Fish cakes

Fish pie or fish in white sauce (a dish whose fragrance pervaded the corridors from break-time)

Cold meat or hard-boiled egg in the summer, served with salad.

Vegetables - nothing exotic like peppers, courgettes,

(Lumpy) mashed potato served from a large metal canister - chips rarely if ever featured

Roast potatoes - but rarely

Carrots or mashed carrots and turnip

Butter beans

Cabbage (you could smell it cooking at morning break), sprouts, all overcooked and watery

Peas - tinned or mushy

Baked beans

Hot chopped beetroot

Salad in the summer

Puddings- we are a lot of custard

Spotted Dick and custard, served from a big metal jug with the thick skin held back by a spoon.

Sponge - lemon, syrup (adored by most), apple, chocolate. Served with custard or chocolate sauce

Apple crumble and custard

Tart - coconut, jam, Bakewell, cornflake, syrup. Served with custard which softened the last two tarts, otherwise teeth were at risk.

Currant tart (often referred to as 'fly cemetery') plus that custard again

Rice pudding, semolina, tapioca (known everywhere as 'frogspawn' and universally loathed but just about edible with a dollop of jam)

Fruit salad

Jelly with mock cream on top

Blancmange, usually pink

Banana custard

Prunes and custard/rhubarb and custard (we liked or loathed them)

Baked apple and custard. We ate a lot of custard!

Drinks. Water was available in metal jugs and there were plastic beakers (sometimes with bite marks in them). Orange squash was for Christmas lunch.