SOCIAL STORIES

Social Story: The Dining Hall

Free download · My SEND Friend Shop

A simple social story about school dining halls, written with noise, queues and sensory load in mind.

This is a simple social story you can adapt. Change names, details and wording so they are true for this person. Read it when things are reasonably calm, not only in a crisis. It is a support, not a script the person must perform, and it is not a licensed or official programme. Stop if it adds worry.

Who this is for

Pupils who find lunchtime difficult, and the adults supporting them.

What is inside

- How to use the story
- Story pages
- A notes page

Please read this first

This is a free starting-point resource from My SEND Friend. It is general information, not legal, medical or benefits advice, and it is not an official or government form. It does not guarantee an assessment, plan, adjustment, payment or any other outcome. Check current official guidance (for example GOV.UK) and get individual advice from SENDIASS, IPSEA or a suitably qualified adviser when you need it.

How to use this story

This is a simple social story you can adapt. Change names, details and wording so they are true for this person. Read it when things are reasonably calm, not only in a crisis. It is a support, not a script the person must perform, and it is not a licensed or official programme. Stop if it adds worry.

Check the real lunchtime routine, including packed-lunch rules and any quieter seating already agreed, before you personalise the story.

THE DINING HALL

Lunch in the dining hall

At lunchtime I may go to the dining hall, or to the place my school uses for eating. It can be busy, noisy, and full of smells.

Some people find this easy. Some people find it hard. Both are okay.

Where I eat at school, if I know

THE DINING HALL

Getting my food and sitting down

I may line up, collect food, or take a packed lunch to a seat. An adult can show me the routine and where I can sit.

If lining up or choosing food is hard, my school may have a plan, such as going a little earlier, having help with the tray, or sitting in a quieter area.

What helps me get my food and sit down

THE DINING HALL

Eating, noise, and people

I can eat at my own pace. I do not have to finish everything if that is not the plan at my school. I can tell an adult if a smell, a noise, or a person too close is too much.

I may use agreed supports, such as ear defenders, a quieter table, or leaving when I have finished rather than waiting in the noise.

Supports I can use at lunch

THE DINING HALL

When lunch is finished

When I have finished, I will put away my tray or my lunch box in the way my school has shown me, if I can, or an adult can help.

Then I will go to play, to a quieter space, or to the next part of the day, depending on the plan. Lunch is finished.

What I do after I have eaten

Our lunchtime plan

Routine, supports, and anything I still need to agree with school

Useful next steps and sources

Use what helped in this pack and leave the rest. You can come back to it when you need to. Live tools on mysendfriend.co.uk remain free, including Help Me Now, the SEND Letter Builder, the Reasonable Adjustments Builder, the DLA and PIP Claim Planners, and the free resources hub. Saving work to My SEND Plan is optional.

Where to check official or independent information

Guidance and benefit rules can change. Check the current official position, and get individual advice when you need it.

- mysendfriend.co.uk family and school resources
- Adapt every story so the facts are true for this person
- This is not a licensed Social Story™ product

> **A reminder about this free pack**
> This is a free starting-point resource from My SEND Friend. It is general information, not legal, medical or benefits advice, and it is not an official or government form. Using it does not start a statutory process or guarantee a particular outcome. Adapt every page to your situation.

mysendfriend.co.uk · My SEND Friend Shop · Supporting families together