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Dear Parents/Carers,

### **Impending Changes to the Administration of Free School Meals in Schools**

Since April 2018, any child who became eligible for Free School Meals (also known as Pupil Premium) based upon the home income/qualifying benefit status has retained them until the end of the current school phase, regardless of if the home income has changed. For example;

**Jo Bloggs** Reception age pupil became eligible on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 as parents were earning below the threshold. On the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2018, the home income changed and parents were no longer in receipt of the qualifying benefits and earning a higher wage – Jo is still eligible for the Free School Meals until July 2025 when he leaves Year 6.

Under the new rules **post 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023**, as and when the home income changes, the child will go on and off the Free School Meal list throughout the school year/school phase. For example;

**Gemma Bloggs** Reception age pupil became eligible on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 as parents were earning below the threshold. On the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2023, the home income changed and parents were no longer in receipt of the qualifying benefits and earning a higher wage – Gemma is no longer eligible for Free School Meals.

The home income changes again a few times for various reasons and Gemma goes on and off the list over the next few years. This means that she will lose some of the in-school benefits for example reduced cost for clubs and uniform vouchers.

Therefore, we are encouraging any family that thinks they might be eligible for Free School Meals, regardless of year group, please apply. Not only does this benefit yourselves, but it has big implications on the school budget allocations. Without the Pupil Premium funding, we could not do many of the lovely things that we do for all children within our school.



Each year, for a child in receipt of FSM (not Universal Free Meals), school receives in the region of £1390. This helps us to fund the following:

- A daily meal for the child, currently £450 per year
- A uniform voucher at the start of the school year worth £20
- Rewards for 100% attendance
- Subsidised club payments and school activities where possible
- Staff training and resources to running interventions, such as English and Maths, Speech and Language support, emotional and wellbeing support
- Additional staffing support in year groups
- Equipment that supports **all** children within the school

### **What is the eligibility criteria?**

Children are entitled to receive FSM if their parents/carers receive any of the following benefits below:

- Universal credit, provided they have an annual net earned income not exceeding £7400 (£616.67 per month) from employment
- Income Support
- Income based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Support under part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum act 1999
- The guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by HMRC
- Working Tax Credit run-on, paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.

If you think you might be eligible for free school meals, submit a claim form to school ASAP. Forms are available from the school office, or you can use an online application form at:

[https://emsonline.nottsc.gov.uk/CitizenPortal LIVE/en](https://emsonline.nottsc.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/en)

The information you provide will be used to check if you are in receipt of a qualifying benefit and, if you are on Universal Credit, that your earnings do not exceed the threshold. If you claim Universal Credit, your earnings will be assessed from up to three of your last Universal Credit assessment periods. If you are eligible, school will be notified. Your child will receive free school meals and the school will receive extra funding.

Kind regards

Miss Wall  
**Office Manager**