

DHaigh/Letters/Parents10-11/FreeSchoolMeals
15 December 2010

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

You may be aware that from September 2011 schools will receive an additional £430 per year for each student in the school who is eligible to claim free school meals irrespective of whether the meals are actually taken. The additional funding is provided to support the child's education and to help raise attainment for this group of youngsters.

We are aware that once a child reaches Secondary School age, many parents, who did claim free school meal entitlement at Primary School, no longer do so. In order to maximise resources available to our students we would like to ensure that all those who are eligible for free school meals actually register with the Local Authority now. The additional funding will be released next September but will be based on those children registered on the system as eligible for free school meals counted on 20 January 2011 (including those who may have left by then). Hence my letter at this point, so that if there are eligible families who have not yet claimed, the Local Authority have enough time to complete the registration before the deadline. If your child is eligible to receive free school meals it is important that you register by returning the attached form in the envelope provided to the Local Authority as soon as possible, even if your child does not actually wish to take up the free school meal. Please be assured that all this information is handled by the Local Authority and not the School.

It is also important to stress that one main reason for installing our 'thumb print' cafeteria payment system was to avoid the stigma which was once associated with claiming free school meals. No longer do students have to queue for a token or a ticket which can identify them as being different, the free school meal allowance is automatically loaded onto their account centrally and they can choose their meal from the full selection and pay using their thumb like everyone else. The value of the free school meals allowance is presently £1.40, and it is also possible to "top up" the allowance by loading extra money onto the account as normal.

I hope that some families will have found this information useful. As we have no way of knowing who may qualify, we have sent this out to everyone.

Yours sincerely

Julie Craig
Headteacher

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