



Infant Free School Meals – impact on school budgets

SUMMARY

- 1.1 Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011. The Pupil Premium is extra funding for schools which is allocated to children who are looked after by the local authority, those who have been eligible for FSM (Free School Meals) at any point in the last six years (also known as 'Ever 6' FSM) and for children whose parents are currently serving in the armed forces. The purpose of the funding is to improve educational outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- 1.2 In September 2014 the Government introduced the Universal Free School Meals (UFSM) policy which provided free meals for all infant pupils. This policy prompted concerns from headteachers and governors that some parents would not complete the eligibility forms which are needed to secure the 2015/16 Pupil Premium funding.
- 1.3 Officers from the School Improvement Team have provided schools with a range of resources to ensure that all eligible parents continue to complete the necessary forms. This strategy is aimed at preventing a reduction in the Pupil Premium element of school budgets.
- 1.4 Heads, Chairs of Governors and business managers have been made aware of the resources available through termly meetings and newsletters.
- 1.5 Work has taken place between the DCC Benefits team and the School Improvement Team to make sure that parents are aware of the importance of continued eligibility claiming.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To continue to support schools in ensuring that all eligible parents complete FSM applications.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 To ensure that schools access all available Pupil Premium funding and use this to raise achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 The Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011, and is paid to local authorities by means of a specific grant based on January school census figures for pupils registered as eligible for FSM in reception to Year 11. In order to access the funding, parents need to complete the registration form FSM even though the meal is provided free of charge to all parents.
- 4.2 Concerns regarding parental reluctance to complete the forms applies to newly eligible FSM parents, likely to be reception pupils. All other funding is protected as families are covered by the 'Ever 6 rule' – ie the school is allocated Pupil Premium if the parent has claimed within the last 6 years. In addition, DfE has indicated that a significant reduction in completion of eligibility forms would prompt an alternative method of distributing funding.
- 4.3 Schools have introduced a range of strategies to encourage parents to complete eligibility forms. Guidance produced by the School Improvement team has been sent out to heads and business managers in the form of a sample letter (Appendix 3) to use with new entrants along with the DCC benefits form. A poster and flyer (Appendix 2) has also been produced and all schools have been given paper and electronic copies, plus translated copies available on request.
- 4.4 The DCC Benefits team supports the above strategies in their work with customers. Officers in the team are advising claimants with infant age pupils to complete the FSM application forms.
- 4.5 It is for schools to decide how the Pupil Premium allocated to their school is spent. However, schools are held accountable for their use of the additional funding to support pupils from low-income families and the impact this has on educational attainment. In Derby, schools are challenged on this by Senior School Improvement Officers (SSIOs) on their visits to schools. Commentary on the impact of Pupil Premium on pupils' attainment and progress is included in the reports sent to schools and governors by the SSIO.
- 4.6 School performance tables now include a 'Narrowing the Gap' measure showing how disadvantaged children perform in each school. Since September 2012, schools have had to publish online details of their Pupil Premium allocation and their plans to spend it in the current year. Derby schools have been provided with a proforma to assist them in presenting this information. All Derby schools publish these details on their school websites.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 N/A

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Estates/Property officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	
For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	Christine Tarpey 01332 640358 christine.tarpey@derby.gov.uk None Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – FSM poster Appendix 3 – Sample letter to parents

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 The level of premium for 2013-14 was £900 per primary pupil, rising to £1300 per pupil for 2014-15. Secondary FSM 'Ever 6' attracts a premium of £935 in 2014-15.

Legal

- 2.1 N/A

Personnel

- 3.1 N/A

IT

- 4.1 N/A

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 N/A

Health and Safety

- 6.1 N/A

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 N/A

Property and Asset Management

- 8.1 N/A

Risk Management

- 9.1 Ongoing review of any issues coming from schools

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 10.1 N/A

Pupil Premium Funding

Registering for free school meals could raise money for your child's school

From September 2014 all children who are in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 will be offered a free healthy school lunch.



However it's important for any qualifying family* to still sign up for free school meals as registering could also raise an extra £1,300 for your child's school from central government, to fund valuable support like extra tuition, learning assistants or after school clubs.

Even if you don't want your child to receive a free meal, we would encourage you to register for free school meals so that their school receives as much funding as possible!



To register please complete the simple form available from your child's school.

***Your child may be able eligible if you get any of the following:**

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

Don't let your child's school miss out!



Derby City Council

Sample draft letter sent to all schools

Infant Free School Meals and the additional funding for our school

From September, all infant pupils will be entitled to a free school lunch. This letter will explain the arrangements for this new system.

School specific Information about lunchtime arrangements; administrative details how parents will inform school each day/week if their child wants a lunch

In addition to the cost of the meals, the school will also receive extra funding from the government for any infant pupil who would have been eligible for a free under the old system.

We are asking parents and carers whose children have a statutory entitlement to Free School Meals to complete this form so that the school can be allocated this extra funding.

Any qualifying family that registers their eligibility by simply completing this form will help raise **Pupil Premium** money for the school, currently **£1300** for every child who is registered. This is money the school can benefit from and use to fund new equipment or maybe more teaching and support staff to work with your child.

I

Please complete all sections of this form if your joint family income is less than £16,190 or you are in receipt of any of the Support Payments listed on the form. Please return your application directly to your child's school which will then be processed in confidence by Derby City Council.

For pupils in KS2 there are no changes to the current arrangements for claiming for school meals.

I would like my child to access the free school lunches from September

(If applicable) I have attached the free school meal eligibility form for the school to pass on to Derby City Council.

Name of child.....

Signed(Parent/Carer)