

 Brent	Schools Forum 26 February 2014 Report from the Director of Children & Families
For Information	
Free School Meals – Changes for September 2014	

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Free School Meals (FSM) Eligibility budget and facilities is currently managed centrally and under the new National Funding Formula is required to be delegated to schools. The de-delegation of the budget was agreed at the November Schools Forum meeting with a request that a report return indicating the charges that will be made to academies for the administration of FSM on their behalf for 2014-15.
- 1.2 From September 2014, all Key Stage 1 children in state-funded schools in England will be eligible for free school meals. This report outlines these changes and what work needs to be done to ensure the changes do not impact on schools potential pupil premium.

2.0 Potential Impact on School budgets

- 2.1 It is important that schools still encourage parents of eligible reception, year 1 and year 2 children to register their child for free school meals before the January census of schools and pupils. The amount the school receives in pupil premium allocation for 2015-16 onwards will be adversely impacted should parents not apply.
- 2.2 Brent will continue to undertake eligibility checking on behalf of schools and provide access to reports of children attending school who are eligible for free school meals. There will be a charge for this service to academies details of which are contained in Table 1 below.
- 2.3 The amount schools receive in pupil premium the financial year 2014-215 will be unaffected as the January 2014 census is used. However there is potential impact on the 2015-16 Pupil Premium but the DfE are working through possible solutions/advice for this.

- 2.4 Brent will assess eligibility for all children who continue in the school and were receiving free school meals at the end of the school year. Schools will be notified of this eligibility at the beginning of the school year. However this will not be possible for reception and year 7 and applications will be required for those children, along with any children who move in-year and the family has had a change in circumstances.
- 2.5 A review of the free school meals process will be undertaken to ensure it is fit for purpose under these new conditions and this will be completed and reported back to schools after the Easter holidays.
- 2.6 Currently, to be eligible for FSM parents must be in receipt of certain benefits which are:
- Income Support (IS) or Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (IBJSA)
 - An income-related employment and support allowance
 - Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - Child Tax Credit, (provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income that does not exceed £16,190.00 (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) (TC 602 Final Award Notice - 2012/2013)
 - For those who receive Working Tax Credit (other than a four week run on period) their child is not eligible for a free school meal.
 - Guarantee element of State Pension Credit Children who receive IS or IBJSA in their own right

3.0 Support for schools

- 3.1 In order to ensure parents continue to apply for entitled free school meals, Brent will support with publicity that helps parents to understand that the pupil premium will be used to fund support and related activities for the child. Brent will also redesign the form to show that the application is not only for free school meals but enables additional funding to the school in the form of Pupil Premium.
- 3.2 There is a capital allocation on a borough-wide basis across community and voluntary aided schools to support the implementation of this new requirement, i.e. to support schools with kitchen and related improvements. However the funding available will clearly fall well short of the requirement. In order to enable fair allocation on transparent criteria, a quick audit of schools kitchens/dining facilities has been commissioned and is underway at the time of writing.
- 3.3 With regard to revenue funding, schools will have received a letter dated 23 January from the Secretary of State. This explains that the revenue allocation to schools will be based on a flat rate of £2.30 per meal taken based on the actual take-up by newly eligible infant pupils which will be measured in the Schools Census from next year. For the 2014-15 autumn and spring terms an estimated amount will be paid and an adjustment will be made later based on the actual take up. From 2015-16, the allocation will be based on a new flag in the Census. It is therefore in the best interest of the schools to encourage parents to take up the free school meals in time for the Census.

4.0 Academy Charges.

- 4.1 2,342 children who attend academy schools in Brent are in receipt of FSM Meals for the 2013 academic year. A total of 10,511 pupils are eligible for FSM in Brent schools.
- 4.2 The overall budget for the administration of FSM was £36,438 in 2013-14 and keeping it at the same rate as £1.06p per pupil, the 2014-15 budgets is £29,384.
- 4.3 Based on the costs per pupil and number of pupils entitled to FSM in each academy for 2013, the indicative charges for each academy for 2014-15 is outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1: FSM entitlement 2013 and indicative charges 2014-15

Academy	Entitled	Rejected	Total	Total Pupil Number Oct 2013	Total Charge
Alperton	229	19	248	1113	£1,180
Ark	246	7	253	1050	£1,113
Ark Franklin	185	14	199	535	£567
Capital City	327	25	352	955	£1,012
Claremont High	195	11	206	1259	£1,335
Convent of J&M Language College	206	5	211	857	£908
Kingsbury High	302	28	330	1582	£1,677
Preston Manor	373	20	393	1551	£1,644
Queens Park	267	9	276	998	£1,058
Sudbury Primary	141	16	157	837	£887
Crest Boys	151	14	165	462	£490
Crest Girls	232	18	250	639	£677
Wembley High Technology College	237	12	249	1096	£1,162
Total	3091	198	2463	12934	£13,710

5.0 Recommendations and Consultation points

5.1 The Schools Forum is requested to:

(a) Note the changes to the FSM provision for Key Stage 1 children from September 2014.

(b) Note the charges outlined in paragraph 3.3 to academies for the 2014-15 year for the administration of FSM on their behalf by the local authority.

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