

10 January 2011

Dear Parents/Carers

Free School Meals

You may be aware from the news that the Coalition Government has introduced changes to the way schools are going to be funded from the start of the new financial year in April.

We have been informed that some of our funding from April will be allocated through a calculation referred to as the 'pupil premium'. This approach will allocate an increased amount of money to each school against the number of pupils who are **signed up** for free school meals by the date of the schools' January census which is **Thursday 20 January 2011**.

I am aware that there may be some parents who are eligible for their child to receive free school meals, but who currently are not signed up – this may be because their child prefers to have a packed lunch, or because they do not wish to be in receipt of the benefit. I also understand concerns with regard to confidentiality about being eligible for such benefits which some parents may have.

However, I would urge any parents who know they are eligible to sign up for free school meals to contact my PA or myself as soon as possible (and definitely before 15 January), as even a small number of additional pupils signing up could make an important difference to the funding we receive. Once you are signed up, pupils do not have to have a school meal each day – they can continue to bring a packed lunch or whatever, but the option is there if required.

Free school meals are available to children whose parents/carers are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Income support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- An income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Families in receipt of Child Tax Credit provided that (a) they are NOT also entitled to Working Tax Credit and (b) their annual income, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, does not exceed £16,190
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit.

In order to sign up, there is a short form to fill in which is available from the college office. You also will need to provide evidence for the type of benefit you receive (more information about the evidence required is provided on the form).

If you would like to sign up, but do not wish to discuss this at the college office, please do contact my PA or myself to make a private appointment. Information regarding free school meals is dealt with discretely, and even your child does not need to be made aware if you prefer.

If you have any questions regarding "Free School Meals", please don't hesitate to ask for further information.

Many thanks.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A M Hillier". The letters are cursive and fluidly connected.

A M Hillier
Headteacher