

Our Ref: AMDM/SK  
Your Ref:

**Anne Marie Davies Macleod**  
Interim Head of Resources & Performance

To: Parents/Carers

Education & Children's Services  
Woodhill House  
Westburn Road  
Aberdeen  
AB16 5GB

Tel: (01467) 534803

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June 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

## **UPDATES ON FREE SCHOOL MEALS, SCHOOL CLOTHING GRANTS, FAMILY PANDEMIC PAYMENTS**

Following recent Scottish Government announcements, please see below the latest arrangements concerning Free School Meals, School Clothing Grants and Family Pandemic Payments. Some frequently asked questions are answered too.

### **Expansion of Free School Meals to Primary 4 pupils**

With effect from August 2021 universal free school meals will be expanded from Primary 1 to Primary 3 to include pupils in Primary 4. From January 2022 this provision will be also include Primary 5 pupils.

### **Free School Meals, Family Pandemic Payment & School Clothing Grants – Primary and Secondary pupils**

All pupils entitled to statutory free school meals, will receive a payment of £287.50 for the period 28 June 2021 to 16 August 2021. The payment is comprised by seven weeks free school meals at £12.50 per week, £100 school clothing grant allowance and the inclusion of £100 summer [Family Pandemic Payment](#).

### **Do I need to apply for this funding and when will I receive payment?**

Eligible families already in receipt of free school meals, do not have to apply for this funding. Payment will be made direct to your nominated bank account by **25 June 2021**.

### **Pre-school age child in funded early learning and childcare settings**

Pre-school age children are not entitled to free school meals and, in accordance with the Scottish Government criteria, are not entitled to the [Family Pandemic Payment](#). This is because the Scottish Child Payment is now available. If you have not already done so you can apply for the [Scottish Child Payment on mygov.scot](#).

### **I have recently applied but I've not been notified of the outcome**

If you have recently applied for income based free school meals, please be assured that we are dealing with all applications as quickly as possible, and we will contact you direct when your application has been processed.

### **Families who are on a low income but not currently in receipt of free school meals can check entitlement by completing the following online form:**

[Check entitlement and apply for free school meals](#)

Children are eligible for free school meals if their parents (or carers) are in receipt of a qualifying benefit.

The current qualifying benefits and allowances are:

- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)
- Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit)
- Any income related element of Employment Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (CTC), but not Working Tax Credit (WTC), and have an income of less than £16,105
- Both Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit with an income of less than £7,330
- Support under Part VI of the [Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#)
- Universal Credit with a monthly take home pay of less than £610  
*(the qualifying benefits and allowances are subject to change)*

If you are aged 16-18 years-old and receive any of the above qualifying benefits in your own right, you can apply for free school meals.

### **Family Pandemic Payment Winter 2021**

In addition to the summer Family Pandemic Payment, the Scottish Government also announced a £100 payment which will be paid no later than 16 January 2022. Further information will be made available later in the year confirming expected payment dates.

For more information please visit: <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/school-info/assistance/free-school-meals/>

Yours sincerely



Anne Marie Davies MacLeod  
Interim Head of Resources and Performance  
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