



**The Federation of  
Hackbridge Primary School and Spencer Nursery School**

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24<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

**Free School Meals – provision during school closure**

Parents/carers whose children are in receipt of Free School Meal entitlement, because their parent(s)/carer(s) is in receipt of certain benefits, were telephoned yesterday regarding whether they wished the school's catering company to make a packed lunch for their child, which they have to collect from the school every day from today to Friday this week (between the hours of 12pm and 3pm).

This is an arrangement which the local authority had agreed with the school's catering company, Caterlink, following the government's guidance at the end of last week and **before** the Prime Minister's announcement yesterday evening about staying home unless absolutely necessary. We therefore understand that some of you today have chosen not to come to the school to collect this lunch for your child(ren).

All schools which use Caterlink are offering the same arrangement to their Free School Meal children during this week. The government had also previously announced that they were looking into setting up a voucher scheme for pupils eligible for Free School Meals to replace schools being the distributor of lunches in future weeks. Whilst the local authority are currently working with the Department for Education to establish what this will mean in practice moving forwards, in school we do not currently know what this will be or how it will be arranged. However, as soon as we do know, we will inform you.

**One vital distinction that we wish all parents/carers to know is that the Free School Meal entitlement is not the same as the Universal Infant Free School Meal entitlement for all pupils of Reception to Year 2 pupils. Only those pupils who are entitled to Free School Meals because their parents have confirmed with the local authority previously that they are eligible will be entitled to whatever voucher scheme the government puts in place.**

If, for any reason, you believe your child to be eligible for the Free School Meal entitlement, but you have not signed up to this, we would urge you to do so by making an application on the London Borough of Sutton website at: [https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200521/benefits/1288/free\\_school\\_meals\\_and\\_pupil\\_premium](https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200521/benefits/1288/free_school_meals_and_pupil_premium)

Information from the council website reads as follows:

*You may be eligible to receive Free School Meals and funding for your child's school through the Pupil Premium, if you receive of one of the following benefits:*

- *Income Support*
- *Jobseeker's Allowance (Income Based)*
- *Employment Support Allowance (Income Related)*

- *Child Tax Credit (but **not** Working Tax Credit) and your annual gross income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) is not more than £16,190*
- *Working Tax Credit Run-on – paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit*
- *Universal Credit*
- *Support under part six of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999*
- *The guaranteed element of Pension Credit*

*Part-time pupils are not entitled to free school meals. Children who qualify must be receiving education before and after the lunch period to be entitled to free school meals.*

We will update you on this issue as soon as the government and/or the local authority provide us with their decision.

Yours faithfully



Emma Walford  
Headteacher

