



29th February 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

Free School Meal Entitlement

Our free school meal numbers have dropped since the introduction of the government funded universal free school meal programme (which allows every child from Reception to Year 6 to have a school lunch at no cost to the parent). However, in common with most schools, it is very likely that a number of our parents do not claim free school meal entitlement for their child(ren) even if they may be entitled.

It is really important for you to know that FSM entitlement is not just about free school lunches. Lower free school meal numbers in all year groups has resulted in falling income for the school and therefore less money to spend on resources for SPPS children. All schools receive additional funding based on the number of children who receive FSM and so we are writing to ask you, if you believe that you may be entitled to claim FSM for your child(ren) and do not already do so, to please make a claim. We are sure you will agree the children at this school can only benefit if we are able to attract additional funding, particularly in times of such severe budget deficits. If you would like to see how we use this additional funding please take a look at our [Pupil Premium Grant Strategy](#) on the school policies page of our website.

Other Advantages to Applying for FSM:

If you do have a benefit related FSM entitlement, then you will then receive supermarket food vouchers during the school holidays and your child will be able to attend [holiday activity clubs with food](#) free of charge. Other benefits such as free school milk and reduced cost music lessons with [Croydon Music and Arts](#).

Who Can Apply?

Children whose parents receive the following may be entitled to free school meals:

- Income support;
- Universal Credit if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household earned income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get);
- income-based jobseeker's allowance;
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance;

- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit;
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child tax credit, and have an annual income that does not exceed £16,190 as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. **(If you receive working tax credit as well as child tax credit you will not be entitled to free school meals);**
- The guaranteed element of state pension credit.

Further information on FSM eligibility can be found on the [Croydon Council website](#) and you can check your entitlement using the [LGfL Free School Meal Eligibility Checker](#). It takes just a few minutes to complete this form but it could mean a big difference to you as a parent and us if you are eligible.

If you think you might have FSM entitlement, we would strongly encourage you to apply for this. If you need any assistance making the check, please contact the school office in confidence who will be very happy to help.

Caroline Barriball and Samantha Sandle
Co-Headteachers