



15th June, 2018

Dear Parents,

Did you know that your child could qualify for free school meals?

There has recently been a number of changes to the criteria for the eligibility to free school meals. The current criteria and the implications are detailed below:

- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

In addition, the following pupils will be protected against losing their free school meals as follows

- From 1 April 2018, all existing free school meals claimants will continue to receive free school meals whilst Universal Credit is rolled out. This will apply even if their earnings rise above the new threshold during that time.

- In addition, any child gaining eligibility for free school meals after 1 April 2018 will be protected against losing free school meals during the Universal Credit rollout period.

- Once Universal Credit is fully rolled out, any existing claimants that no longer meet the eligibility criteria at that point (because they are earning above the threshold or are no longer a recipient of Universal Credit) will continue to receive free school meals until the end of their current phase of education (i.e. primary or secondary)

If your child is eligible, it means they can enjoy delicious, healthy meals without the bills and fuss of making packed lunches. In addition to free lunches, those who are eligible can also have a free breakfast before school.

Tarleton Academy actively encourages all families entitled to free school meals to apply. No-one else will know that your child qualifies as we use a cashless system that means that payment is discreet. Your child's catering account will be topped up daily automatically with £1.65 for breakfast and £2.20 for lunch. Please note that students cannot carry over the breakfast allowance to lunch, or 'save up' their allowance. Purchases beyond this amount are funded by parental 'top up'.

Claiming free school meals also helps us support your children further in school. We receive extra funding, known as the 'pupil premium', for every eligible pupil who is registered. The pupil premium

grant is funding provided to schools to focus additional resources on helping pupils who are eligible in this category to reach their full potential, to make sure this is in line with their peers. The more pupils that are registered for free school meals, the more funding the school receives on their behalf. Please remember registering for free school meals does not mean your child has to take up free school meals if they do not want to but it does bring this 'top up' funding to enable us to ensure they are supported in other ways to make sure they can do their best.

If you think that you may be eligible, please complete the attached form and send it to the Pupil Access Team directly at: **Pupil Access Team South, Level 1, Christ Church Precinct, County Hall, Preston, PR1 8XJ Tel: (01772) 531809**

If you have any further questions or queries regarding free school meals please contact Mrs B. Jarvis.

Yours sincerely

Mr M Cunniffe
Head of School

Outstanding education at the heart of the community

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