My ref: Parent Letter – Covid Support – Summer HT
Date: 19th May 2021
Contact: Please contact your school for more information

To Parents/Carers of pupils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Schools and Early Years Settings

People & Communities
Education Directorate

Dear Parent / Carer,

Covid Support Grant and Summer Half Term

Direct Food Voucher Scheme

On the 14th April, the government announced further funding to support vulnerable families up until step 4 of the Covid-19 roadmap. In line with previous rounds of grant funding, we have decided will continue to prioritise support to financially vulnerable families via our Direct Food Voucher Scheme. This will cover the summer half term which starts on the 31st May.

A supermarket voucher will be allocated to parents / carer whose child meets the following criteria -

- Funded Childcare and Education for 2-year-olds under the income based criteria (children aged 2)
- Early Years Pupil Premium under the income based criteria (children aged 3 and 4)
- Free School Meals (children and young people aged 4 to 16)
- 16-19 students in Sixth Forms eligible for Free School meals or for the 16+ bursary (young people aged 16 to 19).

If your child normally receives Universal Infant Free School Meals (in Reception, Y1 and Y2) but you do not meet the criteria for income related Free School Meals, you will **not** be eligible for a supermarket voucher during the summer half term holiday period.

A detailed list of criteria and information on how to apply for income related free school meals are attached to this letter. If you have any further queries in relation to free school meal entitlement please contact our Education Welfare Benefits Team on ewb.fsm@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or telephone them on 01223 703200.

We will issue each eligible child/young person with a £15 supermarket voucher by the end of the 28th May for the summer half term holidays. The voucher does not need to be used in a single shopping trip and once claimed will last for at least a year.

We will use information held by schools, settings and the Local Authority to allocate the vouchers using a system called Wonde. Vouchers will be sent by email and text to the allocated parent. If your child is eligible for income related free school meals, or other criteria shown above, on or before the 21st May they will automatically receive a voucher to cover the summer half term holiday period. Any children who become eligible up until the 28th May will receive a voucher and these will be sent as and when we are notified. Due to the grant terms and conditions, we are unable to allocate vouchers to new applicants after this time.

Details of the supported supermarkets and how Wonde works can be found in the frequently asked question document sent with this letter. Please note that **all** unclaimed summer half term vouchers will be withdrawn on the **2nd July**. Once you select a supermarket, they will not be withdrawn.

If you **do not** wish to receive a food voucher please let your school or setting know as soon as possible so that we can reallocate the voucher to someone else in need.

If you have not received your voucher **by the 31st May** or have any queries about this scheme, please contact winter.support@cambridgeshire.gov.uk . Please include in any correspondence the name of your child, their date of birth and which education establishment they attend. This will avoid a delay in responding to your query.

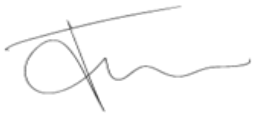
Wider Support

We understand that as a result of the pandemic, there are many families that may need further support who are eligible for the Direct Food Voucher Scheme. We also know there will be families who don't meet the above criteria but are in need of support. Therefore, there is a network of hubs run by the city and district councils that will be able to help you to access further support. Details of support in your local area can be found below:

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/wintersupport
www.peterborough.gov.uk/wintersupport

If you are unable to access the information online, you can call your local hub on 0345 045 5219. The team is available Monday – Friday 9am-5pm.

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan Lewis
Service Director – Education,
Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council

Appendix 1 – Eligibility for Direct Voucher Scheme

Parents eligible for Funded Childcare and Education for 2-year-olds under the income based criteria (children aged 2)

In order to qualify you must be in receipt of one of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Universal Credit, and your household income is £15,400 a year or less after tax, not including benefit payments
- Tax credits, and your household income is £16,190 a year or less before tax
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- The Working Tax Credit 4-week run on (the payment you get when you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/free-childcare-2-year-olds

Parents eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium under the income based criteria (children aged 3 and 4)

In order to qualify you must be in receipt of one of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part six of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on, which is paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - your household income must be less than £7,400 a year after tax not including any benefits you get

https://www.gov.uk/get-extra-early-years-funding

Parents eligible for Free School Meals (children and young people aged 4 to 16)

In order to qualify you must be in receipt of one of the following benefits:

- 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 guaranteed 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 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals.

If you wish to apply for a free school meal, please apply online at
www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals
www.peterborough.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals

Eligible for 16+ bursary (young people aged 16 to 19)

- You're in, or have recently left, local authority care
- You get Income Support or Universal Credit because you're financially supporting yourself
- You get Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in your name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit
- You get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your name and either ESA or Universal Credit

https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund

Eligible for 16-19 Free School Meals

Free meals in further education defines disadvantage as students being in receipt of, or having parents who are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC))
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after someone stops qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit with net earnings not exceeding the equivalent of £7,400 pa (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Free meals in further education funded institutions: guide for the 2020 to 2021 academic year - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

How to Claim Free School Meals

We understand that families continue to live in uncertain times and many are facing changes to their financial circumstances as a result. If you have not previously applied for Free School Meals, or your name has recently changed, and feel you now meet the below criteria, please visit www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals to apply online;

- Income Support.
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance.
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance.
- Child Tax Credit - but no element of Working Tax Credit - and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)) that does not exceed £16,190.
- If you are supported under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit.
- Working Tax Credit during the four week period immediately after your employment finishes or after you start to work less hours per week.
- Universal Credit with an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400.

Also schools are continuing to provide support for eligible families, in the form of either food parcels or vouchers, during this period where pupils are unable to attend. Your school will be able to confirm the support that they are offering. The form is simple to complete and will give you an immediate response.