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Dear Parents and Carers,

Financial Support for Parents

In school, we use an online free school meal system where you or, if you give permission, the school can check if your child is eligible for Free School Meals.

Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 receive a free meal every day in school, **but this does not mean that your child is entitled to the extra benefits that being eligible for Free School Meals brings.** If your financial situation means that your child is eligible to Free School Meals, then the school will receive an additional £1,345 to spend on supporting your child. This funding helps to pay for the additional adults and services that school organises to support your children.

In addition, if eligible, your child would continue to receive free school meals in Years 3 to 6 (currently worth £10.50 a week). **Over the course of your child's time in Key Stage 2, that would save you £1,600.**

During much of the pandemic, children eligible for benefits-based Free School Meals have received £15 a week in supermarket vouchers (often during the holidays as well). At least £15,000 in vouchers has been given to families in our school over the last year. The only way of knowing if your child is entitled to this extra financial support is by making a claim to check your eligibility.

We would like to ask as many of you as possible to find out if you could claim on the Online Free School Meal system for your child. This would greatly help the school and your child, as every child who qualifies secures the extra £1,345 to be used by school to provide the additional services that support your children. Please either:

- Apply online yourself at <https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims/>
- or fill in the declaration attached to this letter so that we can apply on your behalf

All you need to complete an application are your contact details, National Insurance Number, date of birth and the name and date of birth of children attending school. It is very easy, and every parent who successfully claims for a Free School Meal helps to improve the quality and breadth of the services we can provide the whole Fairfield Primary School community.

Do not worry about accidentally making a 'false claim' – your child will either qualify or not qualify for the additional funding and it will not affect any other claims for benefits or tax relief that you apply for.

If you need any more information, please do not hesitate to contact school, by email on fairfield@sbcschools.org.uk or call on 01642 581305 where we will be happy to help.

Thank you,
Mr A Ruffell

Declaration for school to apply on your behalf

Eligibility is based on one of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child tax credit with an annual gross income into the household that is no more than £16,190, provided you are not entitled to working tax credit. If you are entitled to any part of working tax credit there is no eligibility with the exception of working tax run-on as shown below
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

I agree that you will use the information provided to process my claim for free school meals and will contact other sources as allowed by law to verify my initial, and ongoing, entitlement.

I agree that the information may be used to ensure accuracy of records across the local authority and the check against fraud.

I agree that you can inform the school(s) attended by my child of their initial and ongoing entitlement to free school meals.

You may be aware of our [Privacy Policy](https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims/pages/privacy_policy) (https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims/pages/privacy_policy)

To complete an application on your behalf, we need you to provide:

Child's name Class

Additional information required:

Home Address and Post Code

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1. Parent name Date of birth

National Insurance number.....

2. Parent name..... Date of birth.....

National Insurance number.....

Signed..... Date

**PLEASE FEEL FREE TO EMAIL YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO
fairfield@sbcschools.org.uk and we will claim on your behalf, thank you**

Information for you regarding Free School Meals and the reason we ask you to apply

This Pupil Premium funding is essential to help us to provide your children with the highest level of support we can give them and, along with our existing school budget, has helped to pay for:

- Subsidies to attend residential trips
- Subsidies for school trips and associated transport costs
- Subsidies to support afterschool activities
- Specialist small group support for children across school who work with additional teachers or some of our teaching assistants. This effectively reduces the class sizes for many Literacy and Numeracy lessons for all children.
- Additional teaching sessions for children across school
- School funded Speech and Language therapy
- School funded counselling for children
- Support from Mrs Watson, our Parent Support Adviser

This is a substantial pot of money which is helping us to support all children, as they are jointly funded by the school budget and the Pupil Premium money.

Our school does not automatically receive this funding – to receive it we have to encourage all of our parents who are receiving certain benefits to apply for a free school meal for their child. The government know which children are entitled to this benefit, but they only pay it if you apply for it.

As well your child receiving their free school meal, the school will be given additional funding of £1,345 for each pupil who qualifies. Service children (e.g. children with parents in the Army, Navy or RAF) also attract additional funding at a lower level to provide support when required. **Without this additional funding, almost all of the trips, academic support and extra services that we provide to children and families would not be possible.**

From September 2014 the Government decided to offer a universal free school meal to all 5-7 year olds (Reception – Year 2). Whilst we think that this is an excellent initiative, it does unfortunately mean that many parents in Key Stage 1 feel that there is little point in making a claim for a free school meal. **However, if your child is eligible for a free school meal and you make a claim, the school would receive approximately £1,345 each year to provide additional support for your child.** This extra £1,345 will continue to be paid to support your child's education for six years after the original claim, even if your circumstances change and you are no longer receiving benefits.

It is important for all parents who are in receipt of benefits to apply for Free School Meals and make it possible for this additional funding to be used to support your child and others in our school.

Please make sure you apply for Free School Meals even if your child prefers a packed lunch or are in Key Stage 1 and receive their Universal Free Meal, as we still get the money to help to improve our services across the full school.

Last year, our school received approximately £85,000 of additional Pupil Premium funding to support children in school who have, at any time, been eligible for free school meals. This funding has dropped by approximately £20,000 over the last few years. **Without this additional funding, almost all of the trips, academic support and extra services that we provide to children and families would not be possible.**