31st March 2020

Dear Parents,

National Voucher Scheme for FSM

The government today announced a National Voucher Scheme to provide support for those children eligible for benefits-related free school meals. Where schools are open for children of critical workers and vulnerable children, schools will continue to provide meals for pupils in attendance.

The Free School Meal vouchers are for term time only, and are fully funded centrally, by the government. We have been informed today, from DfE’s voucher supplier Edenred, on how we should manage the voucher scheme. We already have a list of the pupils eligible and currently in receipt of benefits-related free school meals. Vouchers will be made available to the adult with caring responsibility for that child.

Each eligible pupil, currently not attending school, will receive a weekly £15 voucher. This will be set up to be delivered by email each week until further notice. Where a family has more than one child eligible for benefits-related free school meals this funding will be combined into one voucher. Through your email address we will send an ‘eCode’ directly to the parent or carers of the pupils(s) eligible for free school meals. On-line, you will then be asked to choose an eGift card from a range of supermarkets. These include:

• Morrisons

• Tesco

• Sainsbury’s

• Asda

• Waitrose

• M&S

Once you have received your voucher, you will be able to redeem it in-store at the selected retailer by either:

• presenting the voucher on a smartphone or tablet

• presenting a paper copy of the voucher

Families are free to select the most appropriate food and drink for your child. When selecting products, we encourage families to consider health and nutrition. The [School Food Standards](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standards-for-school-food-in-england) may act as a useful guide for families. The vouchers should not be redeemed for any age-restricted items, such as alcohol, cigarettes or lottery tickets.

It is vital we have a relevant email address for you. If you do not currently have an email address but you do have a smart phone, please contact the academy and we will help you to set up a free Gmail address. Alternatively, if you do not have an email address, you could nominate a family member to receive the code on your behalf.

As a parent, if you consider that your child meets the eligibility criteria for free school meals but does not currently receive one, parents should make contact with the school or local authority, who will verify eligibility and possibly award free school meals. The eligibility criteria for free school meals can be found on [apply for free school meals](https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals).

We are very grateful for this support from the government in these difficult times. If you have any questions on how this scheme will work please contact the school. We expect the first FSM vouchers to be sent out to you by email before the end of this week.

Kind regards,

Mrs Alex Waddington.