



8th April 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

FREE SCHOOL MEAL UPDATE

We wanted to ensure that all our pupils who are entitled to benefits-related free school meals continued to receive support whilst the schools continue to stay closed. You should already have received a £25.00 shopping voucher to cover the cost of school meals until Friday 3rd April.

This week the Government launched its national 'Free School Meals Scheme'. The Government Scheme allows Parents/Carers to receive shopping vouchers worth £15.00 per week per child. Parents/Carers will be given the opportunity to choose which Supermarket to redeem the vouchers.

We have now switched to the Government Scheme and will be issuing vouchers to you to cover meals from Monday 6th April onwards, as this scheme offers a better deal for Parents/Carers. On Saturday 4th April 2020 the Government updated its guidance to confirm that the scheme will continue through the Easter holiday so Parents/Carers will receive vouchers to cover the Easter Holiday as well as during term time.

How the Government voucher system works

The Government has appointed Edenred to supply free school meal vouchers. Through the scheme Edenred will email an e-code to the parent or adult with caring responsibility for all children who are currently eligible for free school meals. **The vouchers can be only be used to purchase food and will be issued every two weeks during term time and the Easter Holiday whilst schools remain closed.** Each fortnightly voucher will have a value of £30.00 per eligible child for the two-week period, which is the equivalent to £3.00 a day.

When you receive your e-code from Edenred go to the www.freeschoolmeals.co.uk website where you can choose an eGift card from a range of supermarkets. You should receive your eGift card by email within three hours of your submission of your e-code from Edenred. Vouchers are currently available for the following retailers: Morrisons, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda, Waitrose and M&S. The Government is working to add more supermarkets to the scheme.

Redeeming the vouchers

Once families have received their eGift card, they will be able to redeem them 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 their child. We encourage families to consider health and nutrition when shopping, for more information the [School Food Standards](#) is a useful guide for families. The vouchers **cannot** be redeemed for any age-restricted items such as alcohol, cigarettes or lottery tickets.



Families without internet access

If you do not have an email address or internet access, please contact school as soon as possible and advise us which supermarket you would like vouchers for. We will order your eGift Card for you and post a copy to your home address.

Entitlement

If you do not wish to receive a supermarket voucher in place of your child's free school meals please notify the school urgently by calling 024 7622 0937 or emailing FSM@egcoventry.staracademies.org. In these circumstances we will consider alternative arrangements for your child.

Please note that the arrangements outlined in this letter are only available to pupils who currently receive benefits-related free school meals.

It is very important to us that all of our families are well looked after, particularly during this difficult time. We understand that some families may be struggling to afford everyday essentials, so if you are without the food vouchers during the Easter holiday please email info@egcoventry.staracademies.org and we will do our best to support you.

I wish you a peaceful Easter break and hope that you and your family stay safe and well.

Yours sincerely



Sumeya Bhikhu
Acting Principal