

Active Learning Trust Guidance: Free School Meals Provision

FSM meals update

The Government has confirmed that the total value of vouchers offered to each eligible child per week will exceed the rate it pays to schools for free school meals, recognising that families will not be buying food in bulk and may therefore incur higher costs.

Schools are therefore authorised to issue vouchers valued up to £3 per day to recognise the higher costs. This will apply for the current duration of school closure and the value will be aligned with the DfE scheme when announced. There will not be any clawback if the value is lower. The additional cost will be claimed back from the DfE once full guidance is available.

It is only for pupils not attending school or receiving their free school meal via another route eg: in school under the Key Worker provision currently being finalised or via packed lunch provided by the school.

Extent of FSM entitlement

Our interpretation of entitlement has been “registered for FSM” and this is supported by the wording in the DfE guidance referring to “benefits-related free school meals”

Whilst not explicit – but until we are instructed by the DfE otherwise we are working on the more limited definition – SIMS should pick up children in KS1 who are registered for FSM – the only issue will be where parents have not registered because they automatically get UNIFSM

UNIFSM provision

Pupils still attending school as part of the Key Worker or Vulnerable Group are still entitled to UNIFSM but once they are **not in school** they would only qualify if registered for FSM.

Wonde – Online provision of Free School Meals Vouchers – preferred solution

Following a trial with Chantry Academy this afternoon who have an existing data integration with Wonde schools are now advised to utilise this route for the automatic provision of free school meal entitlement using supermarket vouchers.

To start the process please login to Wonde (if you already have an account) or create a new account online at <https://edu.wonde.com/login> - **important - please use Google Chrome browser**

Once you have created your account you will need to arrange for the SIMs data integration – if possible please ring the support desk at Wonde on 01638 779144 – they can be emailed at support@wonde.com. to set up the data integration (DPIA has been completed centrally)
The system does rely on your FSM students data having up to date email and mobile phone numbers.

Once you have the data integration set up please follow the guidance in the documents below.
<http://help.wonde.com/en/articles/3822242-creating-a-supermarket-voucher-order>
<https://www.wonde.com/documents>

If you need technical assistance setting up the system please contact the Wonde helpdesk above.

The testing has been using one payment of £2.35 or £2.30 to one recipient paying on credit card – and it is suggested that you test paying one days FSM allocation to one or a small number of recipients first to make sure all works smoothly and if possible confirm test payment has been received by parent. Future payments will need to be set up on BACs as I suspect most Credit Cards will have insufficient limits, there is an option to make a same day payment on Barclays.Net which attracts a charge but this should be added to list of Coronavirus additional expenses list and is only for this one payment.

The suggestion is that the payment to parents is made weekly – so for 7 days this week and 6 days next week to get as close to the £15 per week as possible and will then get us through to the Easter break, when we can review.