



# Montgomery Academy

An Academy within the Fylde Coast Academy Trust

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## UPDATE : Free School Meals Vouchers

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am just writing to give you an update on the Free School Meal provision during the weeks whilst Montgomery Academy is closed. As you know the government launched a National Voucher scheme in late March.

As many schools have done, we believed that a voucher system would be more beneficial to our parents. This was because the vouchers could either be

- emailed directly to the parent from the government's appointed distribution company and then used as a scannable code in the designated supermarkets or
- emailed to school, activated as an e-gift card, for us to print and then post home

Our provision before this was provided by our catering provider and was in the form of weekly food parcels. The problems with this system, although best-intentioned, were

- Parents had to collect from school (Only 40% of families collected their parcels, which is understandable when advice is to stay at home)
- Some of the food was perishable and we did not have the capacity to store it for very long

Therefore, as many schools have done, we decided to switch to the National voucher scheme to ensure that all parents received their entitlement and they did not have to make an extra trip. It also reduced the number of people coming to the school site, when we are running only a skeleton staff.

Collecting the required information to use the scheme, such as latest email addresses and whether parents/carers would want the vouchers posting or emailed to them directly, has taken a week.

We placed our order for the first set of vouchers on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April. In theory, according to the website, vouchers should be emailed to parents in 1 hour and the ones to be posted should be emailed to school within 48 hours. This has not happened and there are articles in the press about the unfulfilled orders from many, many schools. I am sure that the order will be processed at some point, yet I have no idea when.

In the meantime, I have asked our catering suppliers to provide food parcels for next week. They believe they can provide 100 parcels on Tuesday and 100 on Thursday. **So further details about collection times for food parcels next week will be text/emailed in due course.** If the vouchers come through before then, then we will let you know.

We are trying our very best to provide the entitled food or equivalent vouchers in the safest way possible during these days of national lockdown so please bear with us, as we are reliant on our suppliers.

Hope you are all well and staying safe.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. Khan'.

Mr. Careless