

---

Waltham Forest Town Hall, Fellowship Square, Forest Road, London E17 4JF

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023

To all Headteachers of primary aged pupils,

### **Universal Primary Free School Meals - Update**

I am writing further to my letter of the 19<sup>th</sup> April regarding the Mayor of London's funding so that all primary aged pupils will be able to receive a free school meal in the next academic year. We have now received further detail that I am sharing with you along with next steps that we are taking in Waltham Forest.

#### ***Summary of new details received from the Mayor's Office***

- It has been confirmed that the price per meal will be £2.65.
- Eligible pupils are those in years 3, 4, 5 and 6 not currently recorded as entitled to a free school meal in the school census.
- This funding is for food and the administration of the food (e.g. staffing costs). It is NOT for alternative such as vouchers etc.
- The allocation will be made to the Council who will passport onto schools/MAT's.
- The allocation does not include any provision for capital expenditure.
- The latest detailed grant conditions and principles for schools and the Council are attached to this letter and include indicative conditions and principles that will accompany the grant the Council will receive in July.

#### ***Survey of school needs and requirements***

We do not underestimate the scale of work involved for all schools and their catering providers given there are currently less than 10 school weeks left before the policy will be delivered at the start of September. To help us to work in partnership with you to develop complimentary, manageable and affordable support, it would be helpful if you could answer some simple questions and **complete this short survey - <https://forms.office.com/e/8s2RC8CyB2> by 23 May 2023**. This will allow us to fully appreciate any views, risks and issues you have and what potential support you would find helpful. Thank you.

#### ***Template letter to parent***

We appreciate that you may have already communicated with with parents and carers about the changes from September. Whether or not you have already done so, please find attached a template letter you can adapt and share with your families

that explains the policy/funding, the benefits of a healthy school meal, and the importance of registering for free meals for pupil premium purposes.

### ***Engagement with catering providers***

We are aware that there are a number of different providers of school meals in Waltham Forest who will be impacted by the changes from September.

We will be in contact shortly with those schools who do not use WF Catering offering a wider meeting with them or their catering provider to explore the implications, risks and issues specific to this group.

For those schools who use WF Catering, the service is already engaged in the recruitment of additional kitchen staff to support the anticipated increased uptake of school meals whilst also assessing additional equipment needs (if any). The Service will keep you updated on issues and changes specific to your school.

### ***Finally***

We are currently preparing a communication plan to ensure you and other stakeholders are appropriately engaged and aware of the policy, and the implications and support available to your school. Thank you in anticipation of engaging with the programme to ensure all primary aged children benefit from the offer being provided by the Mayor.

If you have any questions, please contact our Project Manager [andy.ruane@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:andy.ruane@walthamforest.gov.uk).

Best regards,



**Lauren Ovenden**  
**Corporate Director of Education**