

Dear Parent/Carer,

### **Free School Meals Entitlement**

Currently, 25% of students at Bristol Metropolitan Academy qualify for Free School Meals entitlement (FSM). However, we believe many more families may qualify and not be aware. In the current financial climate we are keen to ensure all families are aware of what would qualify a student and the benefit that would bring to the student, family and the Academy.

Your child qualifies for free school meals if you meet one of the following criteria: Income Support

- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals.

Your child may also get free school meals if you get any of these benefits and your child is both:

- younger than the compulsory age for starting school
- in full-time education

If your child is entitled to the Free School Meals entitlement they would then be entitled to £2.40 per day to spend in our canteen on either hot or cold food. Due to the cashless catering system we use there is no identifying feature for students removing any concern around a perceived stigma. £2.40 per day adds up to a significant saving of money each academic year. Even if your child brings packed lunch, and you would prefer to continue to do that, there is still a benefit to applying for FSM as your child would always then have additional money available on their account for emergency use. There is also an additional benefit to the Academy which I have outlined in the section on "Pupil Premium" on the reverse of this letter.

If you think your child may be entitled to FSM then you can apply by either:

- 1) Applying online to Bristol City Council using this link – You will get an instant decision when you apply this way.

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/free-school-meals>

- 2) Complete a paper-based application and return to Bristol City Council. The application form can be found on our website:

<http://bristolmet.bristol.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Free-School-Meals-Application-Form.pdf>



## **HIGH STANDARDS, HIGH ASPIRATIONS, HIGH EXPECTATIONS**

- 3) Come in to the Academy Reception at any point Monday to Friday during term time between 8:00am and 5.00pm. Staff can help you complete the form and check your entitlement. Please bring current evidence of one of the listed reasons for FSM entitlement as well as your National Insurance Number.

Please also read the information overleaf about Pupil Premium and why applying for FSM Entitlement (if you may be eligible) is of benefit to the Academy, even if you don't intend your child to use the food entitlement.

### **Pupil Premium**

Pupil Premium funding is provided to schools for every eligible pupil each year and is currently worth around £900 per student per year.

Students will qualify for pupil premium funding if they meet one (or more, though they only get awarded one lot of funding even if they meet multiple) of the following criteria:

- Student currently in receipt of free school meal entitlement (FSM)
- Student has been entitled to free school meal entitlement at some point in the last 6 years though does not currently receive free school meal entitlement
- Student is currently in the care of the local authority (Looked After Child - LAC)
- Student has at some point been adopted from care of the local authority (adopted from care or a special guardianship order – SGO)
- One of the student's parents is currently a member of the regular armed forces of the UK or has left the forces in the last 5 years

The pupil premium funding is not allocated to each individual student but instead brings additional funding to the Academy which can then be used to bring greater resources to benefit students who qualify for pupil premium. You can see a breakdown of what we allocate pupil premium funding for the current academic year on our website. We cannot spend pupil premium funding on parental requests for any individual child (for example, if your child qualifies for pupil premium funding you cannot request that it is spent on one-to-one tuition in science or to fund your child going on an extra-curricular trip) but it is used to ensure a greater provision of resources for all pupil premium students.

Currently, almost 45% of students at Bristol Metropolitan Academy receive additional pupil premium funding. This letter is to ask all parents to take a moment to think whether their child may be entitled to it and whether it could benefit both your child and the Academy.

The Academy will already be aware that your child qualifies for pupil premium funding if they qualify due to currently being in receipt of free school meals or if they have been entitled to it in the last 6 years. We may not be aware though that your child has previously been in care, adopted from care or resides on a special guardianship order. In addition, we are unlikely to be aware of whether either of your child's parents are currently serving in the regular armed forces of the UK or have retired from it in the last 5 years. If you believe any of these could be the case for your child then we would appreciate you letting your child's Head of House know.

If you have any questions please do contact your child's House Team.

Yours faithfully,

Cameron Shaw

Principal