

HIGH STANDARDS, HIGH ASPIRATIONS, HIGH EXPECTATIONS

7th January 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Free School Meals Entitlement

Currently, around 30% 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 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (as long as you are 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 four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit

If your child is entitled to FSM 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 FSM 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 will outline 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 <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/free-school-meals> Using this method you get an instant decision.
- 2) Complete a paper-based application and return to Bristol City Council. The application form can be found on our website: <https://bristolmetropolitanacademy.clf.uk/wp-content/uploads/FSM-Application-Form.pdf>
- 3) Come in to the Academy Reception during term time Monday to Thursday between 8.00am – 4.30pm and Friday between 8am – 4pm. Staff can help you complete the form and check your entitlement. Please bring current evidence of one of the listed reasons for FSM entitlement.

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 do not intend for your child to use the food entitlement.



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Pupil Premium

Pupil Premium funding is provided to schools for every eligible pupil each year and is currently worth around £950 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) [we will only be aware of this if you have previously explicitly told us]
- 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 [we will only be aware of this if you have previously explicitly told us]

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.

Currently, 37% 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 the Academy may be missing out on some funding which could be used to support your child and other children. The biggest way that schools miss out on this vital funding stream is by families not knowing they are eligible or not actively claiming free school meals entitlement. You do not need to use the FSM entitlement each day for your student to then be eligible for Pupil Premium funding.

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 will also be aware if your child is currently in the care of the local authority. You do **not** need to contact us to let us know of these criteria.

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 in complete confidence.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact your child's House Team.

Yours faithfully

Cameron Shaw

Principal

