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31 March 2020

Dear parent/carer,

Following the release of further government guidance today regarding the COVID19 provision for Free School Meals whilst school closures are in place, I wanted to write to you all to outline the arrangements at Green Lane moving forward.

As of today, 31 March 2020 our school kitchen will be closing until schools re-open as it is now no longer sustainable for it to remain open beyond this point.

The government have outlined their plans for a free school meal voucher scheme that we will be able to access by the end of this week. For those families that are eligible for a benefits-related free school meal, they will all receive an evoucher of £15 per eligible child, per week, during term time whilst we remain closed. This will commence following the Easter break and will automatically be emailed to parents. Any children of critical workers, that are eligible for free school meals (benefits-related), will also receive a voucher.

We will be contacting all of those that we do currently have listed as eligible for a free school meal (benefits-related) to ensure we have the most up to date email address to be able to send the voucher via this method.

The vouchers can currently be redeemed at:

- Morrisons
- Tesco
- Sainsbury's
- Asda
- Waitrose
- M&S

You can redeem the voucher by either printing it off and handing it in at the supermarket or by displaying it via an electronic device such as a smart phone or tablet to the cashier. The government are working to see if they are able to add other supermarkets to the list for the convenience of everyone and we will keep you updated regarding any changes around this.

As parents/carers you are free to select the most appropriate food and drink for your child. When selecting products, we encourage you to consider health and nutrition, the [School Food Standards](#) may act as a useful guide for you.

The vouchers should not be redeemed for any age-restricted items, such as alcohol, cigarettes or lottery tickets.

There are a number of online resources available to support you all in preparing healthy and nutritious food, including on the [NHS Eat Well website](#).

Eligibility

We are also sadly aware that in this current crisis, there may now be more families that are eligible for free school meals than previously, due to changes in circumstances. If you're unsure whether your child would qualify, please use the below guidance, and get in touch with us if you think your child might be eligible.

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

- 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)

If your child is eligible for free school meals, they'll remain eligible until they finish the phase of schooling (primary) they're in on 31 March 2022.

Universal Infant Free School Meals for children in Key Stage One

The government have outlined that schools should concentrate their effort and resources on those who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals at this time. Unfortunately, there is no requirement to continue to provide universal infant free school meals to pupils in reception, year 1, or year 2 who are unable to attend school. Children in those year groups who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals will of course be supported and receive an evoucher too.

Current Provision

The current provision of packed lunches for those who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals (including those of critical workers) that have requested a lunch, will remain in place until Friday this week for daily collection between 12:00 – 13:00.

During Easter

As the evoucher provision is only available during term time, there will be no provision during the Easter break however, we do recognise that there still maybe a need during this time and for that reason we are working closely with local community groups to provide some hampers to those most in need during this period.

Critical Worker Children

Children of critical workers that are in school from 1 April 2020 will need to bring a packed lunch into school. Any children of critical workers that are eligible for benefits-related free school meals that are in school this week, will also be provided with a school packed lunch.

We will remain open during the Easter break for children of critical workers, where needed, those children will need to bring in a packed lunch into school.

We understand this is very worrying time for everyone, but by using this voucher scheme we do hope that all of the families in need will be able to utilise this provision to assist their families at this time.

We continue to send you our love and best wishes from all at Team GL.

Stay safe, stay at home, save lives.

Yours Sincerely,

Mr R Goffee
Head Teacher