

This information sheet provides details about Free School Meals, Pupil Premium Funding and how registering for Free School Meals can not only save you money but help support the College for all pupils. Please take 5 minutes to read this information and contact us if you would like to take it further.

At Heathfield we know that students who eat regular healthy meals are more likely to:

- Increase their ability to concentrate
- Work to the best of their ability
- Make good progress
- Achieve their full potential

What is Free School Meals?

A Free School Meal (FSM) is a statutory benefit available to school-aged children from families who receive other qualifying benefits and who have been through the relevant registration process. At Heathfield this includes:

- A wide range of healthy hot and cold food options 3 times a day; at breakfast, break and lunch
- Cashless catering with food purchased information

What could I save if I was entitled to FSM?

Currently a school meal costs £2.10 so over 40 weeks of the school year that is a **potential saving of £420.00.**

How do I know if my child is eligible?

Children are eligible to receive Free School Meals (FSM) if their parents are in receipt of any of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seekers' Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided they 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 4 weeks after you stop Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit and earning no more than £7,400, after tax and not including other benefits. *(This earnings threshold has recently been updated. If your child currently receives FSM and you earn over £7,400, their FSM will be protected until they finish secondary school)*

This is an entitlement that we do not want our students and their families to miss out on.

How does the FSM entitlement work with cashless catering?

Students receiving Free School Meals:

- Have an amount equivalent to a meal deal (main meal and pudding) credited daily onto their School Gateway account, and
- Pay with their thumb exactly the same way as any other student; they are not separately identified in any way

What difference does this make to the College?

For every child that is registered as eligible for Free School Meals the College receive proportionally more funding and are able to provide support for a wider range of students. This of course, benefits everyone, as more students make better progress, are more engaged and successful at school then the whole community is able to enjoy the benefits.

This means that the relevance of Free School Meals to the whole College has become increasingly important. Last year we were able to provide additional 1:1 or small group support in Maths and English, iPads for Pupil Premium students who needed them, training of Digital Champions, homework clubs, financial support for uniform and equipment, reductions in Music lesson costs, additional trips and visits to raise aspiration.

What if I don't want my child to have a school dinner?

If you are entitled to FSM but don't want your child to have a school dinner that is entirely your choice but please **still register** as simply doing that makes a difference to the College.

Claiming free school meals brings money into the College, which can then be spent on supporting students. It is very simple to register:

Just complete the simple registration form which can be found on the East Sussex County Council website at <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/educationandlearning/schools/school-life/meals/free/>.

If you need help to complete or check a form please telephone Mrs Millis on 01435 866066 Ext 1203, email jmillis@heathfield.co.uk or call in and ask at Student Services.

If you are eligible, please register.

Thank you.