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**St Mary’s – Parent Guide to**

**Pupil Premium**

Pupil Premium is additional funding given to publicly funded schools to help all pupils reach their full potential regardless of their background or financial situation.

The grant is paid directly to the school and is used to improve the attainment of those children who are eligible. This can be awarded when families are in receipt of certain benefits. Pupil Premium families are entitled to claim for an annual school Clothing Allowance, help with trip costs, Free School Meals and Milk.

**Is your child eligible?**

**Pupils may be eligible for funding if:**

* They are registered for Free School Meals, or have been registered at any point in the past 6 years
* They are currently in Local Authority Care or have been for more than one day
* They have left Local Authority Care as a result of adoption, Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangement Order
* They have one or more parent serving in the Armed Forces.

Please apply even if your child is receiving the universal free school meals in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, as the larger the number of eligible pupils who are registered to receive the Pupil Premium funding the more funding the school receives. If your child receives free school meals in the above years this does not automatically mean your child is receiving Pupil Premium funding.

### How long will a free school meals award last?

For as long as your child continues to attend a Dorset school and you continue to receive one of the qualifying benefits. You are required to notify the Council of any changes to your benefit status which may affect your continued entitlement.

**My child has just started school and already has brothers and sisters who get free school meals – do I need to reapply?**

Yes, you need to reapply so that the new child can be included in the family’s current free school meals award.

**Who qualifies for free school meals?**

Your child qualifies for free school meals as long as you receive any of these benefits:

* 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)

The school doesn't see any information about your income.

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

### Free school meals & Universal Credit

• The Government recognises the benefits of providing a healthy free school meal to disadvantaged pupils who are aged between 5 and 16 years old.

 • Transitional protections were initially enacted with an end date of March 2022, the date the rollout of Universal Credit was due to end. When the end date moved to March 2023 the Government extended the protections in line with this date. As the rollout is continuing, the end date for transitional protections is being further extended to March 2025.

• This means that pupils who were eligible on 1 April 2018, or who became eligible since then, continue to receive free meals, even if their household is no longer eligible under the benefits/low-earnings criteria, up until March 2025 and then until the end of their phase of education

• New applicants for free school meals on or after 1 April 2018, who are in receipt of Universal Credit and have earnings above the earned income threshold, will not 4 be eligible for free school meals.

**Applying for Pupil Premium funding?**

Go to Dorsetforyou.gov.uk and search for Free School Meals or use the link below:

https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/education-and-training/schools-and-learning/at-school/free-school-meals

If you have any further questions or require help filling in the online information, please speak to the school office.

