



# St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

## Ysgol Gynradd Santes Fair

11 November 2020

Dear Parents

Details of pupils in receipt of FSM's are entirely confidential.

During this difficult time a little reminder that if you are in receipt of **one** of the following your child may be able to get free school meals:

### **Free School Meals**

The Social Security Act 1986, means that the Council can provide Free School Meals (FSM) to children whose parents or who themselves are in receipt of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit with an annual income less than £16,190 (you are not entitled if you also receive Working Tax Credit)
- Income Related Employment Support Allowance
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Universal Credit (where the monthly net earned income is not more than £616.67)

With effect from 1st April 2019, the Welsh Government has introduced an annualised earned income threshold of £7,400 for Universal Credit claimants who wish to claim free school meals for their children. At the same time, the Welsh Government has introduced a programme of transitional protection to protect families from losing eligibility for free school meals until the end of the rollout of Universal Credit and thereafter to the end of the school phase (primary, secondary).

### **Transitional Protection**

1. Any pupil eligible for free school meals at the point of 1st April 2019 will have their eligibility protected. This will apply to all applicants until the end of the rollout of Universal Credit, regardless of whether their circumstances change.

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2. Any pupil who becomes eligible under the amended criteria during the rollout of Universal Credit will also retain their eligibility until the end of Universal Credit rollout, regardless of whether their circumstances change.

3. Once the rollout of Universal Credit has completed, any transitionally protected child will continue to be transitionally protected until the end of their current phase of education, e.g. primary / secondary.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Are children still protected if their parents stop receiving Benefits entirely?**

Yes, pupils remain protected until the end of UC roll out and then to the end of their current phase of education, regardless of whether their circumstances change.

### **What happens if the child moves to live with another family member who does not meet the eligibility criteria or leaves the area?**

The protection is awarded to the individual child. If they move to live with another family member, they will keep their protection, even if the family member they move to live with does not meet the eligibility criteria. If the child moves to another Authority then they will still keep their protection.

### **If I am receiving free school meals for my eldest child prior to 1st April 2019, will the transitional protection cover their sibling who doesn't start school until September 2019?**

If you receive free school meals prior to 1st April 2019 for a child who is currently in education, you will not automatically be entitled for any sibling who starts school after this date. The transitional protection only covers the child you receive free school meals for at the time. Your income will have to be assessed when a sibling starts school to see if you meet the new criteria for them.

## **School Clothing Grant**

Pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals entering Reception, Year 3, Year 7 or Year 10 as of September 2020 may also be entitled to a clothing grant. See below for further details.

## **Pupil Development Grants**

The Welsh Government has introduced a grant to assist families on low incomes for the purchase of:

- School uniform including coats and shoes;
- School sports kit including footwear;
- Uniform for enrichment activities, including but not limited to, scouts; guides; cadets; martial arts; sports; performing arts or dance;
- Equipment e.g. school bags and stationery;
- Specialist equipment where new curriculum activities begin such as design and technology; and
- Equipment for out of school hour trips such as outdoor learning e.g. waterproofs.

The funding is available to pupils who attend maintained schools and are eligible for free school meals (not transitionally protected) or are looked after, entering:

- Reception in September 2020
- Year 3 in September 2020
- Year 7 in September 2020
- Year 10 in September 2020
- Pupils in special schools, special needs resource bases and pupil referral units in the above age groups

Funding of up to £125 is available for each eligible learner with the exception of those in Year 7. Eligible learners in Year 7 will be entitled to a maximum of £200.

Payments will be issued based on automated eligibility checks and these checks will be carried out on a regular basis. The payment will normally be made in to your bank account, we may need to contact you to obtain this information.

If you become eligible during the financial year or have any further queries, please contact the Benefits Team on 01495 742291 or 742377.

#### **How do I apply for free school meals and the uniform grant?**

**Complete the online form through Monmouthshire County Council website.**

The shared benefit service at Torfaen Council are dealing with free school meals on behalf of the Authority. You can view the [full privacy notice](#) here which will provide further details on how your information is managed.

The Shared Benefit Service can be contacted on 0300 456 3559 or emailed at [benefits@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely



Miss O'Donnell  
Acting Head Teacher