

National free school meals voucher scheme opens to orders

I have been notified by the Government that the national free school meals voucher scheme has opened to orders. Schools can begin ordering free school meal vouchers for eligible pupils from today, adding to the support available for disadvantaged families.

An online service for schools, the scheme allows schools to place orders for supermarket gift cards on behalf of parents and carers whose children are eligible for free school meals.

The vouchers are worth £15 a week per child and families can receive codes by email to redeem themselves, or as a gift card provided by post, collection or delivery to families without internet access.

In addition to the national scheme, schools can continue providing free meals to eligible pupils via lunch parcels, through catering suppliers, or via locally arranged solutions. This might include vouchers for a local shop or supermarket not currently included in the national scheme.

The Department for Education continues to work with LACA, the body representing school caterers to ensure lunch parcels and meals all meet high standards. Guidance developed by LACA and Public Health England is being updated to reflect the additional funding that has been provided to support schools and school caterers in following this approach.

You can read more about the scheme at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-free-school-meals-voucher-scheme-opens-to-orders>