

Decision Maker: EDUCATION PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Date: For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday 2 July 2014

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: FREE SCHOOL MEALS UPDATE

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Chief Officer: Executive Director of Education, Care & Health Services

Ward: (All Wards);

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 To update Members on progress made within Bromley schools with regards the implementation of the Free School Meals for Infants programme.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 That Members note the progress of Bromley Schools in introducing Universal Free School Meals for infant age pupils from September 2014.
- 2.2 That Members note the additional support provided via Basic Need Capital Grant to school kitchens in those schools that are both permanently expanding and have to implement Universal Infant Free School Meals.
- 2.3 That Members note that works to address the insufficiencies identified funded by the Universal Infant Free School Meal Capital Grant will be delivered either through direct grants to schools or through the award of contracts to undertake a programme of kitchen works at Bromley schools.
- 2.4 The Portfolio Holder agrees to the allocation of the £386,780 Universal Infant Free School Meal Capital Grant to schools based on the outcome of the specialist consultant's reports on school kitchen sufficiency. This capital grant will be targeted at infrastructure improvements that currently restrict the capacity of school kitchens to deliver school meals.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: New Policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated Cost No Cost Not Applicable: Further Details
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring Cost Non-Recurring Cost Not Applicable: Further Details
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Education Capital Programme
 4. Total current budget for this head: ££387k
 5. Source of funding: Specific Government Grant
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional):
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: The Education Act 1996 Section 512 as and when amendments are put in place by the Children and Families Act 2014
 2. Call-in: Applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected):
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 On 17 September 2013 the Government announced that all KS1 pupils in state funded schools would receive free school lunch from September 2014. The Government has since clarified that the Children and Families Bill will place a legal duty on state-funded schools in England, including academies and free schools, to offer a free school lunch to all KS1 pupils from September 2014.
- 3.2 Following its announcements the Government has published detailed arrangements covering revenue and capital funding that deals with the implementation of the new policy.

Revenue Funding

- 3.3 On 5 December 2013, the Government announced that it will be making available revenue funding of £450 million in 2014/2015 and £635 million in 2015/2016 to support the extension of Free School Meals.
- 3.4 Schools will receive revenue funding at a unit rate of £2.30 for each meal taken by pupils who will become newly eligible for a free school meal as a result of the new policy. Schools are expected to continue to fund meals for pupils eligible for FSMs under the existing criteria in the same way that they do currently.
- 3.5 Schools will be notified of their provisional full year revenue funding allocation for the 2014 to 2015 academic year in June 2014. The allocation will be based on pupil data from the January 2014 Schools Census as well as the assumptions that 87% of newly eligible pupils will take meals and that they will take 190 school meals in the course of a full academic year.
- 3.6 The Government has also announced £22.5m transitional funding for small schools with less than 150 pupils. This will provide an additional £3,000 to all eligible small schools plus a multiplier based on pupil numbers and school size.

Capital Funding

- 3.7 On 18 December 2013 the Government announced £150 million capital fund for 2014-15 to ensure that schools can build new kitchens or increase dining capacity where necessary.
- 3.8 The Council has employed a consultant to undertake a sufficiency audit of maintained and VA school kitchens. This audit excludes kitchens at schools permanently expanding as part of the school Basic Need Programme. The aim of the audit is to identify and prioritise kitchens that require capital investment. The report is due during June 2014 and officers are working with the Bromley Primary Consortium Group and individual schools to agree capital allocations.
- 3.9 All Bromley Primary Schools have kitchens capable of providing a hot meal. The £386,780 Universal Infant Free School Meal Capital Grant is to be utilised to address significant issues with school kitchen sufficiency and infrastructure. Schools are expected to purchase additional equipment that is required to ensure they can deliver infant free school meals to all eligible pupils in September. It is expected that equipment will be purchased through the pass through in existing catering contracts and the difference between the current price of a school meal in Bromley and the additional revenue per meal received by Government.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Government announcement means that from September 2014 a free school meal must be offered to all Bromley pupils of infant age. The local authority is responsible for supporting schools in ensuring that kitchens are capable of delivering a school meal for all infant pupils.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Bromley has received a capital allocation of £387k to support maintained school in delivering this new initiative through kitchen improvements. Although additional revenue funding for schools has been announced at a rate of £2.30 for each additional pupil taking up a free school meal the actual funding to be received by Bromley school has not yet been announced.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Children and Families Bill will place a legal duty by inserting new provisions in the Education Act 1996 on state-funded schools in England, including academies and free schools, to offer a free school lunch to all pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2 from September 2014.

Non-Applicable Sections:	[List non-applicable sections here]
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Report No.ED14014 - GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL FOR FREE SCHOOL LUNCHESES FOR KEY STAGE 1- IMPLICATIONS FOR THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AND SCHOOLS