



Rt Hon David Laws MP
Minister of State for Schools

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To all Directors of Children's Services
Local authorities in England

23 January 2014

Dear Director of Children's Services,

Universal free school meals for infants

As you may be aware, there are important changes happening in school lunch provision in state-funded infant and primary schools. The Government has announced that, from September 2014, we will provide funding to enable schools to offer a free lunch to every primary school child in reception classes, year 1 and year 2. We have also announced today that we intend to amend the Children and Families Bill which is currently before Parliament to place a legal duty on primary schools to deliver this important commitment.

In addition to making over £1billion in revenue funding available over the next two years, the Chancellor announced in his Autumn Statement that the Government will be making capital funding of £150million available in 2014-15 to support schools in providing free school meals to all children in reception, year 1 and year 2 from September 2014. The details of the capital allocations for universal infant free school meals by local authority were announced on 18 December, and are attached at Annex A. They can also be found at <http://tinyurl.com/qh992nu>.

We know, from pilot projects held between 2009-2011, that universal free school meals can have significant benefits both for individual children and for the broader life of the school. Pupils in the pilot areas were found to eat more healthily and perform better academically – and these improvements were most pronounced among the poorest pupils. Schools also reported improved

behaviour and atmosphere, as a result of all pupils (and an increasing number of teachers) eating together every day.

Clearly, it is for you to prioritise capital expenditure according to your local circumstances. However, I hope that you will identify ways to use this funding to help schools secure the benefits of universal infant free school meals for their pupils. I would like to encourage you to consider how this funding could be used to improve school kitchen and dining facilities, and to support creative approaches to meeting the increase in demand for school food, such as through the expansion of hub kitchens. Your allocation includes an element for the voluntary-aided sector, and you will also want to consider working with colleagues in this sector as you take your plans forward. You will also shortly be notified of your maintenance allocations for 2014-15; it is for you to judge how best to use these funds to meet school needs.

We have also announced today how revenue funding for this policy will be allocated in 2014-15. After discussion with local authorities, schools and caterers, we have decided that the fairest approach is to allocate schools a flat rate of £2.30 per meal taken, based on actual take-up by newly eligible infant pupils which will be measured in the Schools Census from next year. In addition, we recognise that some smaller schools will face particular challenges. We will therefore be providing transitional funding totalling £22.5million in 2014-15 for small schools, which will be provided before the start of the new academic year. More details will be made available shortly.

To help you with your plans, which may involve renegotiating existing catering contracts, the Government has set up a webpage on free schools meals, which you can find at: <http://tinyurl.com/d7ywsni>. This will provide more details on the support available for the implementation of the policy once they become available. If you want to contact the Department directly, you can do so at freeschoolmeals.mailbox@education.gsi.gov.uk.

I would also strongly recommend that you read the School Food Plan (www.schoolfoodplan.com): an invaluable source of both inspiration and practical advice. As well as explaining the case for universal free school meals in greater depth, it lays out 16 further actions that the Government and others will be taking to help improve the food culture in our schools.

The Secretary of State and I have also written today directly to all primary headteachers about this policy: I enclose a copy of that letter for your information.

Thank you in advance for helping to deliver this major reform, which will have a positive impact on children, schools and families up and down our country.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'D' followed by a flourish and a long horizontal line.

David Laws MP

Annex A

Capital Allocations:

Universal infant free school meals capital in financial year 2014-15

Universal infant free school meals capital	
Other allocations	
Academies	20,856,157
LA and VA allocations	
LA UIFSM capital	102,742,203
VA UIFSM capital	26,401,641
Total UIFSM	150,000,000

Allocations to local authorities

LA Num	LA Name	Universal infant free school meals capital 2014-15		
		LA	VA	Total UIFSM 2014-15
TOTALS		102,742,203	26,401,641	129,143,843
301	Barking and Dagenham	708,101	92,428	800,528
302	Barnet	600,472	345,641	946,114
370	Barnsley	366,857	81,562	448,419
800	Bath and North East Somerset	353,269	53,595	406,864
822	Bedford Borough	317,152	30,910	348,062
303	Bexley	440,694	100,177	540,871
330	Birmingham	2,267,245	596,647	2,863,891
889	Blackburn with Darwen	261,234	242,347	503,581
890	Blackpool	121,297	108,489	229,786
350	Bolton	489,918	325,814	815,732
837	Bournemouth	171,764	135,243	307,007
867	Bracknell Forest	282,479	58,011	340,490
380	Bradford	1,350,141	257,110	1,607,251
304	Brent	590,291	242,434	832,725
846	Brighton and Hove	517,577	124,291	641,867
801	Bristol, City of	707,940	91,865	799,805
305	Bromley	386,780	30,824	417,603
825	Buckinghamshire	1,105,663	241,568	1,347,231
351	Bury	356,034	168,924	524,959
381	Calderdale	361,085	108,792	469,877
873	Cambridgeshire	1,289,292	141,997	1,431,289
202	Camden	225,999	166,413	392,412
823	Central Bedfordshire	523,590	64,158	587,748

895	Cheshire East	639,635	177,236	816,872
896	Cheshire West and Chester	663,526	187,886	851,412
201	City of London	0	7,619	7,619
908	Cornwall	757,646	89,614	847,259
331	Coventry	755,762	198,276	954,038
306	Croydon	712,309	131,390	843,700
909	Cumbria	828,836	321,138	1,149,975
841	Darlington	68,866	18,702	87,568
831	Derby	634,304	49,699	684,003
830	Derbyshire	1,761,052	231,264	1,992,316
878	Devon	1,283,400	228,624	1,512,023
371	Doncaster	602,597	107,796	710,393
835	Dorset	615,584	267,846	883,430
332	Dudley	773,920	81,388	855,308
840	Durham	1,039,603	251,135	1,290,738
307	Ealing	834,528	196,631	1,031,160
811	East Riding of Yorkshire	752,956	32,642	785,598
845	East Sussex	985,408	198,146	1,183,554
308	Enfield	817,893	230,875	1,048,768
881	Essex	2,727,179	430,147	3,157,326
390	Gateshead	376,277	118,966	495,243
916	Gloucestershire	1,029,341	228,277	1,257,619
203	Greenwich	658,515	156,023	814,539
204	Hackney	467,631	118,360	585,991
876	Halton	240,710	125,156	365,867
205	Hammersmith and Fulham	194,893	141,088	335,981
850	Hampshire	3,055,034	388,587	3,443,621
309	Haringey	505,110	143,945	649,055
310	Harrow	504,790	116,628	621,418
805	Hartlepool	159,939	82,427	242,366
311	Havering	536,417	106,325	642,741
884	Herefordshire	246,883	83,986	330,869
919	Hertfordshire	2,474,003	599,071	3,073,074
312	Hillingdon	564,797	131,434	696,231
313	Hounslow	613,059	95,761	708,820
921	Isle of Wight	226,239	69,786	296,026
420	Isles of Scilly	4,930	0	4,930
206	Islington	307,131	145,547	452,678
207	Kensington and Chelsea	117,048	121,996	239,044
886	Kent	2,777,325	553,788	3,331,113
810	Kingston Upon Hull, City of	273,620	91,172	364,792
314	Kingston upon Thames	285,605	127,624	413,229
382	Kirklees	1,033,470	200,701	1,234,171
340	Knowsley	203,150	252,824	455,974
208	Lambeth	513,087	210,225	723,312
888	Lancashire	1,779,731	1,520,882	3,300,614
383	Leeds	1,685,091	342,741	2,027,832
856	Leicester	882,270	65,674	947,943
855	Leicestershire	886,719	122,819	1,009,538
209	Lewisham	663,927	173,254	837,180
925	Lincolnshire	1,084,939	152,084	1,237,023
341	Liverpool	663,646	555,606	1,219,253
821	Luton	601,234	85,285	686,519
352	Manchester	845,993	404,172	1,250,164

887	Medway	566,681	98,445	665,126
315	Merton	437,086	165,807	602,894
806	Middlesbrough	261,033	92,385	353,418
826	Milton Keynes	658,315	82,341	740,656
391	Newcastle upon Tyne	496,332	160,786	657,117
316	Newham	1,027,097	96,367	1,123,464
926	Norfolk	1,708,781	230,225	1,939,007
812	North East Lincolnshire	186,275	0	186,275
813	North Lincolnshire	349,781	6,840	356,621
802	North Somerset	429,310	101,649	530,959
392	North Tyneside	440,453	103,900	544,354
815	North Yorkshire	1,269,049	184,466	1,453,515
928	Northamptonshire	1,216,939	228,147	1,445,086
929	Northumberland	536,737	142,863	679,600
892	Nottingham	481,100	11,689	492,788
891	Nottinghamshire	1,715,315	175,202	1,890,517
353	Oldham	412,073	283,388	695,461
931	Oxfordshire	1,120,254	354,213	1,474,467
874	Peterborough	490,439	72,470	562,910
879	Plymouth	571,892	38,789	610,681
836	Poole	253,177	20,607	273,783
851	Portsmouth	442,057	46,928	488,985
870	Reading	299,515	84,073	383,587
317	Redbridge	776,245	123,122	899,367
807	Redcar and Cleveland	302,641	35,586	338,227
318	Richmond upon Thames	355,273	193,341	548,614
354	Rochdale	492,484	194,034	686,517
372	Rotherham	600,152	70,739	670,890
857	Rutland	49,665	11,689	61,354
355	Salford	427,987	232,130	660,117
333	Sandwell	776,526	97,320	873,845
343	Sefton	396,280	328,238	724,518
373	Sheffield	1,118,931	72,167	1,191,098
893	Shropshire	587,365	75,458	662,822
871	Slough	167,194	110,307	277,502
334	Solihull	425,462	153,253	578,714
933	Somerset	837,134	233,949	1,071,083
803	South Gloucestershire	675,592	72,297	747,889
393	South Tyneside	260,392	112,948	373,340
852	Southampton	440,654	40,781	481,435
882	Southend-on-Sea	388,704	54,894	443,598
210	Southwark	494,688	264,556	759,244
342	St. Helens	292,700	215,160	507,860
860	Staffordshire	1,777,006	260,053	2,037,059
356	Stockport	647,973	164,509	812,482
808	Stockton-on-Tees	381,288	128,663	509,951
861	Stoke-on-Trent	432,196	69,527	501,722
935	Suffolk	1,576,902	168,924	1,745,826
394	Sunderland	443,019	119,832	562,850
936	Surrey	1,965,445	785,312	2,750,757
319	Sutton	366,296	89,744	456,040
866	Swindon	360,965	28,226	389,191
357	Tameside	463,983	168,145	632,128
894	Telford and Wrekin	448,631	46,495	495,126

883	Thurrock	196,817	62,860	259,677
880	Torbay	121,738	34,633	156,371
211	Tower Hamlets	591,373	157,236	748,609
358	Trafford	416,122	233,039	649,161
384	Wakefield	564,075	91,172	655,248
335	Walsall	590,972	106,844	697,816
320	Waltham Forest	535,134	85,631	620,765
212	Wandsworth	437,287	177,799	615,086
877	Warrington	347,296	274,383	621,679
937	Warwickshire	1,025,172	266,071	1,291,243
869	West Berkshire	365,895	75,458	441,353
938	West Sussex	1,439,210	403,263	1,842,472
213	Westminster	101,094	219,056	320,150
359	Wigan	328,135	542,965	871,100
865	Wiltshire	786,427	279,578	1,066,005
868	Windsor and Maidenhead	254,780	101,736	356,515
344	Wirral	623,802	241,048	864,850
872	Wokingham	407,343	73,509	480,853
336	Wolverhampton	588,206	83,380	671,586
885	Worcestershire	1,030,824	241,395	1,272,219
816	York	378,602	68,098	446,700