

The Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP  
Secretary of State for Education

The Rt Hon Vicky Ford MP  
Minister of State for Schools

Thursday 25 June 2020

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We write to thank you for your helpful guidance on the **Covid Summer Food Fund** published today. The guidance addresses many of the points outlined in our letter dated 22 June but we would be grateful for some clarification on the following:

1. The guidance states that “If a school receives a claim for an eligible child after the final ordering date of at least one week before your school term ends but before the start of the school’s summer holidays, it will be possible for the school to place an exceptional order for that child via the Edenred system.” **Can you please confirm whether there will be a mechanism for families who become eligible for free school meals during the school holidays to apply for support?**
2. The guidance states that vouchers must be ordered at least one week before the school term ends and that “after the scheme closes to orders one week before your school term ends, there will be a process to enable schools to rectify any errors on orders already placed.” **Can you confirm whether this is the mechanism for schools to register families who become eligible for free school meals during the six-week break?**
3. Under ‘Alternative support’ the guidance states that schools can make alternative *voucher* arrangements for families that are unable to access any of the supermarkets available through the Edenred scheme. Schools can claim back costs through the ‘exceptional costs’ fund. **Please confirm whether schools can also claim if they offer alternative support using a catered offer or cash-based mechanism?**
4. We are pleased to note that families with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) can access vouchers during the holidays through the Covid Summer Food Fund. However, despite the maximum income threshold of £7,400 being increased to £16,190 on 28 May following legal action<sup>1</sup>, the government guidance on eligibility for NRPF families has not been updated. **Can you confirm that the guidance for both the NRPF and the Covid Summer Food Fund will be amended as a matter of urgency to reflect the £16,190 threshold, so that no eligible families miss out on support?**

As the school holidays are fast approaching, we’d appreciate a prompt reply.

Yours sincerely

Stephanie Wood, Founder/CEO, School Food Matters and co-Chair School Food Plan Alliance  
Barbara Crowther, Coordinator, Children’s Food Campaign  
Anna Taylor OBE, Executive Director, Food Foundation  
Naomi Duncan, Chief Executive, Chefs in Schools  
Rob Percival, Head of Policy, Soil Association’s Food for Life  
James Toop, CEO, BiteBack 2030

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.matthewgold.co.uk/government-u-turn-on-income-threshold-for-free-school-meals-following-legal-challenge-by-low-paid-carer/>