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Friday 15th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

PROVISION OF SUPERMARKET VOUCHERS DURING SCHOOL CLOSURES

We are pleased to confirm that the Department for Education are reintroducing the 'national voucher scheme' for free school meals. This scheme provides supermarket vouchers for children who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals (see qualifying criteria on page 2) and are not still attending the academy during the national lockdown.

The scheme is not currently open to children qualifying for Universal Infant Free School meals (children in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2) unless they also meet the eligibility criteria outlined on page 2 and are not attending an academy during the national lockdown.

The Government have confirmed that the scheme will run for 4 weeks, covering the period from Monday 18th January to Friday 12th February. The vouchers have a value of up to £15 per child, per week (the equivalent of £3 per day) and we will issue vouchers for the value of the full 4 weeks (up to £60 per eligible child) in one payment.

Vouchers will be produced and distributed electronically and will be sent to the most recent email address you have provided to the academy. **If your email address has changed, please contact the academy office to confirm new details by Monday 18 January.** Details as to how to use the voucher will be contained in the email.

Details of participating supermarkets and answers to frequently asked questions about the scheme can be found at <https://www.edenred.co.uk/reward-recipient/Free-School-Meal-Vouchers/>.

Vouchers must not be used for age-restricted items, such as alcohol, cigarettes or lottery tickets and the Department for Education and STEP Academy Trust encourage families to consider health and nutrition when selecting products. Guidance regarding healthy eating is available from [The school food standards](#) and [NHS Eat Well](#) websites.

The Department for Education have confirmed that vouchers may take up to 4 days to be produced; therefore, STEP will continue to make meals available for collection each day until Friday 22 January, so please collect your free hot school lunch as usual from the green gate if you have been doing this for next week until we are certain the vouchers have arrived safely with you.

If you have any questions, or concerns, please contact the academy office who will be happy to help.

Yours sincerely,

Bella Street
Headteacher