

03. 04. 20

Dear Parents and Carers and Staff

You will be aware that all of the schools within Ironstone Academy Trust have continued to support families during this unprecedented time. This has included providing childcare for families where parents are identified as key workers, as well as for our vulnerable pupils. Each school has sought to provide learning activities for our children to enjoy at home, and we have offered support on more practical matters to some families, including vouchers for Food Banks and guidance on welfare benefits.

The Trust has ensured that all children who would access Free School Meals for economic reasons have had access to a lunchtime meal every day. From 20th April, all schools in our Trust will send these families an electronic voucher (for £15 per eligible child, per week) that can be used in local supermarkets to purchase food. These vouchers will be sent out weekly and the families who we believe are entitled, will be sent individual messages regarding this, over the next few days.

**The current circumstances mean that family and financial situations can change rapidly. The staff at your child's school will help you to understand if your family are entitled to one of these vouchers.**

Your child's school will be sending all families a Free School Meals Application Form which can be completed and returned to School or directly to the Educational Benefits email address at the Local Authority. If you don't have the means to print off and return the form, please just contact School (in confidence) and we will make the application on your behalf. Alternatively, please contact Rae Rynn at Redcar and Cleveland Council on 01642 771106 - she is very helpful and will help you with the process. The turnaround time to process applications is very quick at the moment; we are all working hard to ensure that help gets to the correct people as soon as possible.

Finally, can I thank the staff from across the Trust, who together with the other key workers in our country are providing an essential service that is helping keep our community safe. Together with our families, who are keeping their children safely at home we are playing our own part in facing the unique challenge in front of us all.

Stay safe.

Yours sincerely

Carl Faulkner

CEO Ironstone Academy Trust