

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Educational Operational Delivery Committee
DATE	3 June 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Free School Meals Annual Update 2020/21
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/21/139
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Derek McGowan
REPORT AUTHOR	Neil Carnegie
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide the annual report on free school meals during 2020/21.

2. RECOMMENDATION

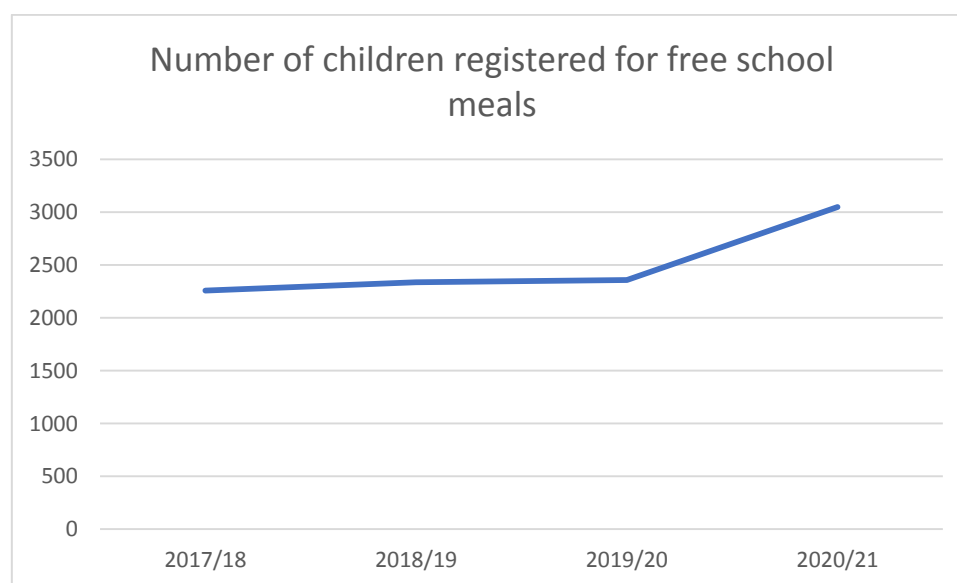
That the Committee: -

2.1 Note the increase in the registration for free school meals during 2020/21.

3. Free School Meals 2020/21

3.1 Good progress has been made during the year to increase registration of children entitled to free school meals.

3.2 The following chart and table sets out free school meal registrations from 2017/18 to 2020/21.



- 3.3 Total number of children registered for free school meals has increased from 2,358 to 3,050 over the year representing a 29.5% increase. A further 1,201 children in P1 to 3 are also entitled to free school meals through universal entitlement.
- 3.4 Significant progress has been made in increasing registrations by children at secondary schools and over the year registrations have increased from 1,106 to 1,441 (30%). Historically, there has been a dip in registrations when children move from primary to secondary. There are several factors that influence including the opportunity to leave school during the lunch period and the perception of school meals.
- 3.5 A range of interventions are contributing to increased registrations.
 - 3.5.1 Throughout the COVID crisis we have distributed vouchers to children entitled to free school meals during periods when children were not at school during lockdown and holiday periods.
 - 3.5.2 Children registered for school meals have entitlement to £100 Hardship Payments from the Scottish Government.
 - 3.5.3 Our previous system required parents to make separate applications for each school their children attend. The criteria for free school meals is such that if one child in a family qualifies for the benefit, then all children in the family qualify. During the pandemic, the free school meals team completed a manual data match, matching children in receipt of free school meals with their siblings who were not. The benefit was then provided for all siblings in the family.
 - 3.5.4 Our benefit processing teams are automatically awarding educational benefits when relevant applications are made for housing benefit and council tax reduction.
 - 3.5.5 We have proactively engaged with parents through the year to maximise registrations. This has included through crisis support lines and by direct communications at annual revalidation checks. In addition, we extended the end date for entitlement when no response has been made by families at revalidation.
 - 3.5.6 The discretionary extension to free school meal entitlement agreed at this committee in September 2020.
- 3.8 The initiatives set out above are continuing and we anticipate that the improved registration rates shall be sustained. A breakdown of registrations by individual schools is appended to this report.

3.9 The following table sets out school meals served:

	Primary meals served	Secondary meals served	Total
2018/19	1,539,766	79,831	1,619,597
2019/20	1,344,896	82,780	1,427,676
2020/21	59,265	32,690	91,955

3.10 The number of meals served reduced due to the COVID crisis impacting on schooling. However, all children entitled to free school meals were provided with vouchers to redeem in local supermarkets. More than seventy thousand vouchers were issued, including vouchers to cover school holiday periods with costs met by Scottish Government grant funding.

3.11 The Scottish Government has now set out the phased approach to universal free school meals for all primary children, and the provision of free school meal approaches in school holidays to all eligible primary and secondary children and young people in 2021/22. This will mean that the following phased introduction of universal and targeted free school meal support will commence in 2021/22:

- Phase One – July 2021 – Commencement of free school meal holiday support to all children and young people who are eligible for free school meals on the basis of low income, in primary and secondary.
- Phase Two – August 2021 – Expansion of Universal Free School Meals to P4 children.
- Phase Three – January 2022 – Expansion of Universal Free School Meals to P5 children.

3.12 To support the implementation of the phased approach the Scottish Government is providing the Council with £585k to deliver meals during holiday periods and £1,043,00 for delivery of phase two and three during 2021/22.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 No new financial implications arising from this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 No new implications arising from this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk	N/A		
Compliance	N/A		

Operational	There is a risk that families experience food poverty.	L	We will continue to monitor effectiveness of systems and processes to maximise registrations and uptake of free school meals.
Financial	There is a risk of reduced income due to less school meals being paid for by children.	L	Scottish Government grant funding and monitoring of impact on budgets.
Reputational	N/A		
Environment / Climate	N/A		

7. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	N/A
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Maximising uptake of free school meal entitlement will contribute to improve health and development of children.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	Maximising uptake of free school meal entitlement supports the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 13 – No one in Aberdeen will go without food due to poverty by 2026.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Maximising uptake of free school meal entitlement has the potential to impact positively in a range of protected groups and there would be no negative impact on equalities and human rights.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10. APPENDIX

Free school meal uptake by school 2020/21

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Neil Carnegie
Title	Communities and Housing Area Manager
Email Address	NCarnegie@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224-522942

APPENDIX Free school meal uptake by school 2020/21 (children registered for free school meals as a percentage of total school roll)

School Name	School Type	Pupil roll	Number of P4-P7/S1-S6/SP pupils registered for FSM	Percentage of P4-P7/S1-S6/SP pupils registered for FSM
Abbotswell School	Primary	228	29	12.72%
Aberdeen Grammar School	Secondary	1126	107	9.50%
Airyhall School	Primary	365	6	1.64%
Ashley Road School	Primary	404	14	3.47%
Braehead Primary School	Primary	257	27	10.51%
Bramble Brae Primary School	Primary	159	51	32.08%
Bridge of Don Academy	Secondary	671	75	11.18%
Brimmond School	Primary	381	52	13.65%
Broomhill Primary School	Primary	391	16	4.09%
Bucksburn Academy	Secondary	775	101	13.03%
Charleston School	Primary	245	17	6.94%
Cornhill Primary School	Primary	394	66	16.75%
Countesswells School	Primary	50	6	12.00%
Culter School	Primary	307	35	11.40%
Cults Academy	Secondary	1064	63	5.92%
Cults Primary School	Primary	626	11	1.76%
Danestone Primary School	Primary	219	11	5.02%
Dyce Academy	Secondary	556	49	8.81%
Dyce Primary School	Primary	419	32	7.64%
Fernielea School	Primary	261	50	19.16%
Ferryhill Primary School	Primary	364	18	4.95%
Forehill Primary School	Primary	205	10	4.88%
Gilcomstoun Primary School	Primary	244	26	10.66%

Glashieburn Primary School	Primary	237	19	8.02%
Greenbrae Primary School	Primary	290	8	2.76%
Hanover Street Primary School	Primary	211	34	16.11%
Harlaw Academy	Secondary	968	153	15.81%
Hazlehead Academy	Secondary	922	113	12.26%
Hazlehead Primary School	Primary	318	21	6.60%
Heathryburn School	Primary	314	57	18.15%
Holy Family RC Primary School	Primary	139	6	4.32%
Kaimhill School	Primary	303	59	19.47%
Kingsford School	Primary	335	37	11.04%
Kingswells School	Primary	402	6	1.49%
Kirkhill Primary School	Primary	260	50	19.23%
Kittybrewster School	Primary	277	53	19.13%
Lochside Academy	Secondary	1035	238	23.00%
Loirston Primary School	Primary	320	12	3.75%
Manor Park School	Primary	229	65	28.38%
Middleton Park School	Primary	195	7	3.59%
Mile End School	Primary	534	23	4.31%
Milltimber Primary School	Primary	251	2	0.80%
Muirfield School	Primary	177	21	11.86%
Northfield Academy	Secondary	768	252	32.81%
Oldmachar Academy	Secondary	753	43	5.71%
Orchard Brae School	Special	123	37	30.08%
Quarryhill School	Primary	301	71	23.59%
Riverbank School	Primary	352	88	25.00%
School for the Deaf	Special	13	3	23.08%
Scotstown Primary School	Primary	175	20	11.43%

Seaton Primary School	Primary	215	41	19.07%
Skene Square School	Primary	325	30	9.23%
St Josephs School	Primary	356	15	4.21%
St Machar Academy	Secondary	961	255	26.53%
St Peter's RC Primary School	Primary	186	8	4.30%
Stoneywood School	Primary	285	20	7.02%
Sunnybank School	Primary	267	46	17.23%
Tullos Primary School	Primary	289	76	26.30%
Walker Road School	Primary	329	69	20.97%
Westpark School	Primary	250	53	21.20%
Woodside Primary School	Primary	321	67	20.87%
Total		23697	3050	