

From: DfE information <dfe.information@notifications.service.gov.uk>

Sent: 18 January 2021 07:01

To: Janet Perry <janet.perry@tameside.gov.uk>

Subject: 18 January – Coronavirus – Daily update to all early years, children’s social care, schools and further education providers

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of Tameside Council. This email claims to contain information about Coronavirus (COVID-19).

Please inspect the email carefully to verify this is not a phishing email before clicking any links or opening attachments. Please exercise caution. Do you trust the person? Does the email look genuine? Were you expecting the attachment?

This message is just a reminder to remain vigilant. If in any doubt, please contact the IT Service Desk or Cyber Security Officer.



This is the first of 2 daily emails today to keep you updated on the government’s response to coronavirus (COVID-19).

National free school meal voucher scheme

The national free school meal voucher scheme will go live from today (week commencing 18 January).

You will be able to place orders for supermarket gift cards on behalf of the parents and carers whose children are eligible for benefits-related free school meals, to cover the period between 18 January and 12 February (4 weeks).

These gift cards are worth £15 a week per eligible child. You can order eCodes to be delivered direct to parents’ or carers’ email addresses. Families will receive an eCode by email to redeem for a supermarket of their choice. Alternatively, you can arrange for the eCode to be delivered to the school email, so you can provide eGift cards by post, collection or delivery to families without internet access.

Ordering from the scheme

You should have received an email on Wednesday 13 or Thursday 14 January with details of how to activate your account or reset your password for the site by midday Sunday 17 January.

If you have not received this email, please complete [Edenred's online change request form](#).

If you have not yet registered, please do so as soon as possible.

If the links in the email are not working for you, try copying the address directly into your browser.

Once you have registered:

- you will be notified whether to begin ordering on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday (18-20 January). These initial order dates are being allocated in three batches to help manage demand on the site. Please note, if you are registering on the site after midday Sunday 17 January, your order date may be later than Wednesday but within five days of registration
- please avoid attempting to log in before the ordering date you are given – you will not be able to access the website before then
- you will need to prepare your [order file](#) before you can order (see page 5 of the [admin guide](#) for further details). If you're emailing vouchers to families, you should also check that their email addresses are up to date
- you can choose to order for a whole school (for eligible children), order eCodes which cover more than one week and order eCodes which cover more than one child in the same household. See page 6 of the [admin guide](#) for full details and top tips

- please endeavour to place one order covering multiple families, not multiple orders for each family. This will mean your order can be processed more quickly

Families will receive their 16-digit eCodes within 4 days of the order being placed. eCodes need to be redeemed into eGift cards before they are used (see our [step-by-step guide](#) for further details). Families will be able to choose from a range of supermarkets.

In the first week of the scheme the ordering site is likely to be very busy so you may be placed in a queue. The ordering website will be open between 6am and 10pm Monday to Friday. The busiest time is expected to be between 8.30am and 10.30am and at lunchtime, so you may wish to choose a different time to place your order.

Other free school meals provision

As well as using the national voucher scheme, your school still has the option of providing food to your eligible pupils via a lunch parcel, through a caterer or food provider, or via a locally arranged solution. This could include providing vouchers for a local shop or supermarket, or sourcing vouchers through an alternative provider.

For those arranging vouchers locally rather than through the national voucher scheme, more details will be available soon on how you can claim back these costs. Beyond the fact that it will need to be a valid claim based on eligible children and support provided over the specified timeframe, claims will not be subject to any additional criteria and so will be paid in full. The rates are £15 for vouchers or a £3.50 top up if you are providing lunch parcels. These amounts are per week, per eligible child.

Please note that you can use a mixture of vouchers and lunch parcels if different options suit different families better.

You can also read our [full guidance on providing free school meals during the national lockdown](#).