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**THE HART  
SCHOOL**  
*Creative  
Education  
Trust*

ACE/MEL

12 September 2024

Dear Parent and Carers

### **Free School Meal Entitlement and Free School Meal breakfast provision**

We understand that these are uncertain and challenging times for many families, with financial circumstances rapidly changing. If your situation has changed and you believe you may now be eligible for free school meals, we encourage you to complete an online application at <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Educational-awards-benefits/FreeSchoolMeals/Overview.aspx>.

You may qualify for free school meals if you receive any of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Eligible for Child Tax Credit **but not** Working Tax Credit and the household income (as used by HMRC to assess tax credits) is not more than £16,190. **Please note:** anyone eligible for Working Tax Credit, or if you have a partner and they receive it, regardless of Income, you will not qualify
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- In receipt of the 4 week run on of working tax credit (this is where someone becomes unemployed or reduces their hours and so is no longer entitled to working tax credit but will continue to receive it for a further 4 weeks and is entitled to free meals during that time).
- Universal credit (provided you have an annual net earned household income of no more than £7,400 as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods). Your net earned income is your household income after taxes and deductions and does not include income from Universal Credit or any other benefits you may receive.

For additional information, please contact Staffordshire County Council directly on 0300 111 8007, selecting option 3 followed by option 2 or visit their website:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Educational-awards-benefits/FreeSchoolMeals/Q001.aspx>



Your child will remain eligible for 6 years. Therefore, if your child is in Year 7, and already receiving free school meals (FSM), we recommend you reapply at the start of their school career. This will help to ensure they continue to receive free meals even if your circumstances change.

Once your eligibility has been confirmed, Staffordshire County Council will inform The Hart School and your child will be allocated their allowance directly to their school account. Currently the allowance is £2.50 per day and can be spent across either or both break 1 and break 2. This includes the option to buy the meal of the day deal at £2.50. It includes a nutritious hot meal and either a drink or dessert.

The Hart School recognises the importance of a healthy breakfast and are providing a free breakfast for all students. We strongly recommend that your child takes advantage of this opportunity, especially if they are not eating breakfast at home. Ensuring they start the day with a nutritious meal will help them stay focused and ready for the day ahead.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Cleary', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Mrs A Cleary  
**Assistant Principal – Teaching and Learning**