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Guidance

Universal infant free school meals (UIFSM): conditions of grant 2015 to 2016

Updated 30 June 2016

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1.

Introduction

The universal infant free school meals (UFSM) grant 2015 to 2016 will be paid under Section 14 of the Education Act 2002. In accordance with Section 16 of that Act, the Secretary of State lays down the following terms and conditions on which assistance is given in relation to the UFSM grant payable to schools and local authorities (LAs) for the financial year beginning 1 April 2015.

2.

Funding rates and allocations

Funding is based on a rate of £2.30 for each meal taken by eligible pupils. It is assumed that pupils will take 190 school meals in the course of a full academic year. This provides a figure of £437 per eligible pupil as counted in section 2.2 below.

Allocations are based on pupil numbers for academic year 2015 to 2016.

2.1 Provisional allocation

For the academic year 2015 to 2016 a provisional allocation of UFSM grant to schools will be based on the final allocation for academic year 2014 to 2015.

Dual registered pupils will be counted at the setting at which they took the meal on the census day, even if it is their subsidiary setting.

2.2 Final allocation

A final allocation for academic year 2015 to 2016 will be calculated in June 2016, from the October 2015 and January 2016 school censuses.

The calculation uses number of pupils recorded as taking a meal in year 1 and year 2 in the October 2015 and January 2016 school censuses and then subtracts those pupils taking a meal known to be eligible for FSM in the same censuses. This figure is then divided by 2 to give the total number of eligible UFSM pupils in years 1 and 2 for academic year 2015 to 2016.

For pupils in reception the calculation uses the greater of either:

- the number of pupils recorded as taking a meal in the October 2015 and January 2016 school censuses and then subtracts those pupils taking a meal known to be eligible for FSM in the same censuses. This figure is then divided by 2 to give the average number of eligible UFSM pupils in reception for academic year 2015 to 2016

or

- the number of pupils recorded as taking a meal in January 2016 school censuses and then subtracts those pupils taking a meal known to be eligible for FSM in the same census

Dual registered pupils will be counted at the setting at which they took the meal on the census day, even if it is their subsidiary setting.

Where a school does not record pupils in year groups, pupils who are recorded as aged 4, 5 or 6 on the relevant school census will be used to calculate the allocations. Pupils on the alternative provision census placed in independent schools will be included in the provisional and final allocations to local authorities.

3.

Small schools allocation

In addition to the main allocation above, schools with 150 or fewer pupils (including nursery classes) recorded on the January 2015 school census will receive £2,300.

For the small schools allocation, dual registered pupils are counted only once at the setting at which they are main registered.

4.

Allocations to schools

EFA allocates the UIFSM allocations directly to academies and free schools.

Local authorities (LAs) must allocate to each school the amounts set out in the attached schedule of allocations. The grant cannot be held centrally by LAs. A school may agree to use their UIFSM grant allocation to contribute to central LA provision, but the grant must be allocated to each school to enable each school to take that decision.

LAs should not allocate UIFSM grant to academies that were open on, or by, 1 April 2015. LAs should allocate UIFSM grant to schools that converted to academy status after 1 April 2015.

Schools federated, or to be federated, under the provisions of section 24 of the Education Act 2002, during the financial year beginning 1 April 2015 are allocated grant as if they were not federated. In the case of a school which closes before 1 September 2015, the LA should not allocate grant to the school. In the case of a school which closes between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016, grant should be allocated for the proportion of that

period that the school is open.

In the case of a school which opens between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016 and receives all the pupils from two, or more, schools which have closed, the school shall receive grant equal to the total which would be payable to those schools had they remained open, proportionate to the period of the 1 September 2015 to 31 March 2016 for which the school is open.

In the case of schools which are to have pupils transferred from a closing school during the period 1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016; the LA should allocate the grant that would have been paid to the closing school, had it remained open, to the schools receiving those pupils. The amount to be allocated to each school should be agreed with the schools.

The grant must be made available irrespective of the existence of any deficit relating to the expenditure of the school's budget share. UIFSM grant is not part of schools' budget shares and is not part of the individual schools budget. It is not to be counted for the purpose of calculating the minimum funding guarantee.

5.

Terms on which UIFSM grant is allocated to schools

The grant is designed to support schools in delivering the legal requirement to offer free school meals, meeting the school food standards, to all their pupils in year groups reception, year 1 and year 2. Subject to this legal duty being met, the grant may be spent by schools for the purposes of the school; that is to say for the educational benefit of pupils registered at that school, or for the benefit of pupils registered at other schools; and on community facilities, for example services whose provision furthers any charitable purpose for the benefit of pupils at the school or their families, or

people who live or work in the locality in which the school is situated.

The grant does not have to be completely spent by schools in the financial year beginning 1 April 2015. Some or all of it may be carried forward to future financial years.

6.

Alternative provision pupils

UIFSM grant will be allocated to LAs for each pupil recorded as aged 4, 5 and 6 on the January 2015 census who is not recorded as eligible for a free school meal and has been placed by the LA in an independent school.

The amount allocated for such pupils should be spent by the LA by the end of the academic year 2015 to 2016 and can only be spent on providing a free school meal to pupils not recorded as eligible for a free school meal and aged 4, 5 and 6.

7.

Payment arrangements

The grant will be paid by the Secretary of State to schools and LAs as follows:

| Month | Proportion of grant |
|---|---|
| June 2015 (July 2015 for academies and free schools) | 7/12ths of each school's provisional main allocation plus the small school allocation. Schools that were academies on 1 April 2015 will receive their UIFSM grant direct from EFA in July 2015. |
| June 2016 (July 2016 | the final main allocation for each maintained school as at 1 April 2016 minus the amount of the main allocation paid in June 2015. Any school that converts to |

for academy status after 1 April 2015, and by 1 April 2016, will receive the remainder of its main allocation direct from EFA in July 2016.

academies and free schools)

Non-converter academies and free schools, which open after 1 April 2015, and by 31 August 2016, will receive their grant direct from EFA.

Where a school's final main allocation is less than the provisional payment made in June 2015, the difference will be deducted from grant payments for the 2016 to 2017 academic year.

8.

Certification

LAs will be required to certify that they have passed on the correct amount of funding to schools or, where funding has been spent centrally, that it has been spent in line with the conditions of grant. We will issue details of this process alongside the certification arrangement for other grants paid to LAs.

9.

Variation

The basis for allocation of grant may be varied by the Secretary of State from those set out above, if so requested by the school or LA.

10.

Overpayments

Any overpayment of grant shall be repaid to the Secretary of State.

11.

Further information

That the books and other documents and records relating to the recipient's accounts shall be open to inspection by the Secretary of State and by the Comptroller and Auditor General. The Comptroller and Auditor General may, pursuant to Section 6 of the National Audit Act 1983, carry out examinations into the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which the recipient has used its resources in discharging its grant-aided activities.

The LA shall provide such further information as may be required by the Secretary of State for the purpose of determining whether it has complied with the conditions set out in this document.

12.

Other conditions

If the LA fails to comply with the conditions set out in the paragraphs above, the Secretary of State may require the repayment of the whole or any part of the grant monies paid to the LA as may be determined by the Secretary of State and notified in writing to the LA. Such sum as has been notified shall immediately become payable to the Secretary of State.

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