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Dear Parent / Carer,

As you may be aware, the Government has now published details of its national voucher scheme for children eligible for free school meals. Full information can be found here: [national voucher scheme](#).

Whilst we have so far been running our own free school meals scheme at Ormiston Maritime Academy, we will now be taking up this new Government-backed scheme which is likely to start after Easter.

I apologise that this will mean a change to the current arrangements and that we have communicated with you several times on this subject but I hope you understand that this has been a fast-moving and constantly evolving situation. I am pleased, however, that we have been able to actively set up our own initiative in the interim, so that there was a continued school meals service available to eligible children during this period.

The new Government scheme means every child who already qualifies for free school meals will be provided with a weekly shopping voucher worth £15 to spend at a number of supermarkets while schools are closed due to Coronavirus. These vouchers will be sent to you electronically, or as a gift card for those without internet access. The vouchers/gift cards can be spent on food at a range of shops including Sainsbury's, Asda, Tesco, Morrisons, Waitrose and Marks and Spencer's. The Department for Education is working to get more shops to join the scheme as soon as possible.

We have contacted the Government's chosen supplier, Edenred, today to:

- a) Order vouchers individually online. We will then email or text you a code, which will work at the supermarket on your smartphone, if you have one.
- b) Arrange for a bulk order of multiple codes to send to you, or create a gift card for a preferred supermarket to be posted to you if you cannot get online.

In the meantime, and while we wait for the above to happen which is likely to be after Easter, we will continue to run the current scheme we have set up for children on free school meals and will then transition across to the Government's vouchers.

If your child is attending school during this period, then we will continue to provide food for them. With regards to the Easter holidays, as is normally the case, we are unable to provide free school meals or vouchers as we are not funded for this period.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs C Robson  
Principal

