

Formal Council Questions and Responses

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1 **Question to the Cabinet Member for Education & Skills : 2021/1- Free School Meals**

Councillor J.Watkins asked:

Concerns have been raised in regard to the nutritional content and adequacy of FSM currently being supplied during the current Pandemic whereby children are excluded from physically attending School.

Could you please explain in detail what is being provided in respect of the above for children in receipt of FSM for children attending Newport Schools.

Councillor Giles responded:

Following confirmation of funding from Welsh Government in spring 2020, Newport City Council took the decision to provide all families of pupils entitled to free schools meals with supermarket vouchers in lieu of their free school meals usually provided within the school day during lockdown and school holiday periods.

Since April 2020 Newport City Council has issued fortnightly vouchers via email to parents and carers. The vouchers have a monetary value of £39.00. The £39.00 is based on a daily value of £3.90 which complies fully with the recommended rate set by Welsh Government for a free school meal. Parents and carers are able to use the voucher in a range of supermarkets. These can be redeemed at the till or via online shopping which supports click and collect or home deliveries.

The supermarket vouchers cannot be used to purchase alcohol, tobacco or fuel.

Over the course of the autumn term, there have been incidents where some pupils have been required to self-isolate. Newport City Council has also provided supermarket vouchers in this circumstance so that no family misses their free school meal entitlement