

ELIGIBILITY FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS

1 April 2010

To colleagues responsible for performing free school meal eligibility checks

As from **April 2010** the new threshold figure which forms part of the 'Tax Credit' free school meal eligibility category is **£16,190** (an increase from £16,040 for April 2009/10)

Pupils whose parents/carers receive the following support payments are entitled to free school meals (assuming parent does not receive Working Tax Credit)

- **Income Support (IS) – proof of entitlement is in the form of a Job Centre Plus letter or FF260 form**
- **Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA) – proof of entitlement is in the form of a Job Centre Plus letter**
- **Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 – proof of entitlement is in the form of a Home Office letter.**
- **State Pension Credit – proof of entitlement is assessed by the 'Pension Credit M1000 Award Notice'. The 'How Pension Credit has been worked out for...' section of this form clearly shows details of any Guaranteed Pension Credit in payment.**
- **Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)** has been introduced to replace both Incapacity Benefit and Income Support
 - **ESA(IR)** will be an eligible benefit for free school meals - **Proof of entitlement is a letter or a statement from the Department of Work and Pensions/Job Centre Plus**
 - ESA (C) recipients are *NOT* eligible for free school meals
- **Child Tax Credit** with an annual income "as assessed by the Inland Revenue" that does not exceed **£16,190** (**the parents/guardians must not have Working Tax Credit**). – **proof of entitlement is assessed by the 'TC602 Award Notice' by viewing the information inside the box on the first page:-**

Backdating

Claims for free school meals can only be backdated to the date that the application form is submitted to the school by the parent.

Hub

The free school meal hub provides you with a yes or no answer as to whether a parent receives the correct benefits/income to be eligible for free school meals. This service is available free of charge to Food With Thought schools and for a small annual fee to schools not currently contracted with Food With Thought. To contact this service please call Paula Lopez on 01865 797274 or e-mail on paula.lopez@oxfordshire.gov.uk