

MEDIA RELEASE FROM WIRRAL COUNCIL

13/12/11

Council urges parents to claim free school meals

Wirral Council is urging parents to claim free school meals for eligible children, as schools say that many are still not claiming the meals they are entitled to.

In recent years the numbers of children receiving free school meals has been linked to school funding.

This means that even if a child takes a packed lunch into school rather than eat a hot meal, it is important that parents claim any free school meals their children are entitled to as this will impact on the funding schools receive for resources like books and computers.

Schools now follow guidelines as to how to sensitively administer the service; no child is singled out and schools are not told about the individual circumstances of children.

School meals are also now assessed by schools inspector Ofsted and have to meet strict rules on healthy eating.

Cllr Ann McLachlan, Wirral's Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning said: "I would urge anyone who is eligible to claim free school meals for their child to do so.

"Free school meals are now used as a key indicator for school funding, so claiming them makes a real difference to the resources that schools have at their disposal.

"Free school meals are healthier and tastier than ever and it is crucial that even those who provide food for their children to take to school apply for them."

For more information visit www.wirral.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals. You can also call Wirral Council on 0151 606 2002 (have your name, date of birth and National Insurance number ready). You can also email that information to: freeschoolmeals@wirral.gov.uk

Ends

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For further information contact Nick Glover, Press and PR Officer, Wirral Council, 0151 691 8209.