

MAYOR OF LONDON

Date: 19 October 2023

Dear Headteacher,

Thank you for all the work that has gone in to rolling out the Mayor's Universal Free School Meals programme this term.

It is testament to you and your colleagues that an extra 287,000 primary school children can now access a free school meal. We have heard from children and parents across the city about how much it already helping them. This could not have been possible without the dedication of you and your staff.

Please see below details of a Challenge for your pupils which we hope presents an exciting opportunity, as well as information regarding ongoing support for the programme from City Hall.

The Mayor's "Love your Lunches" School Challenge

This week the Mayor launched his "Love your Lunches" Schools Challenge. The Challenge invites London's school children in Years 3 to 6 to celebrate all that is amazing about school lunches by making a creative piece of work on the theme '**The best thing about school lunches is...**'.

By entering the challenge, pupils will have the chance for their work to feature on the Mayor of London's communications platforms with further fantastic prizes to be announced shortly. Updates will be posted online.

We hope that this is an exciting opportunity for children to showcase what they enjoy about their free school lunch, and what it means for them. Through the Challenge we want to centre children's voices and perspectives. We also want to encourage them to be as creative as possible; entries could be a piece of artwork, a poem, a story, or even a song.

The deadline for entries is Monday 20 November 2023 at 11:59pm. You can find out more about the challenge, including terms and conditions and how to enter on our website here: [The Mayor of London's Universal School Meals creative challenge | London City Hall](https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-mayor-does/priorities-london/free-school-meals/creative-challenge)

Support for Schools

We continue to do as much as possible to support schools throughout the roll out. As part of this we will continue to share examples of best practice, templates, FAQ sheets, communications packs on our school's hub which can be found here: <https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-mayor-does/priorities-london/free-school-meals/guidance-and-support-schools>.

MAYOR OF LONDON

We will be restarting our webinar series, providing examples of best practice, how schools have tackled challenges, and a forum to ask further questions on 6th November at 2pm.

This first session will focus on communicating with families, including best practice on communicating to families the importance of registration for free school meals. You can sign up following this link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/gla-ufsm-good-practice-webinar-communicating-with-families-tickets-740663262757?aff=oddtcreator>. The session will be recorded and uploaded to our online resource hub for those who are unable to attend.

I also urge you to continue liaising with your local authority lead.

I would like to extend my thanks again for all the hard work that I know has gone in the delivery of the Mayor's expansion of Universal Free School Meals.

I hope the rest of the term goes well and wish you a restful October break.

If you have any queries in the meantime, please do send them to freeschoolmeals@london.gov.uk and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

Yours faithfully,



Joanne McCartney AM
Deputy Mayor for Children and Families