Dear Parents/Carers

**RAISE EXTRA FUNDS FOR SCHOOL!**

Is your child eligible for free school meals?

The rising cost of living means everyone could use a bit of help.  If you are unemployed or on benefits then you may be able to claim free school meals for your child. This would not only help you: it would help the school too. Schools are given additional funding by the Government for every child who gets free school meals.  We want to obtain as much as possible so that we can improve education for all students.

**To check if your child is eligible, we need information about you and your child.**

**We ask if everyone can complete the form as once inputted onto the portal it notifies school if there are any changes in your future circumstances**. Children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 already receive a Universal Free School Meal but if you complete this form now you will keep your entitlement when your child moves into year three. **However if any of the below are relevant you MUST complete and return:-**

- you are currently receiving free school meals as we need your details on the new system

- you think you are entitled and would like us to check

- you are in receipt of one of the benefits below

- you have been in receipt of one of the benefits in the past

We are aware there are children who attend St Thomas More School who are entitled to free school meals but do not realise it.  We are also aware that some parents choose not to take up the entitlement to a free school meal.

The pupil premium means that even if you don't wish to access a free daily meal, applying will mean that this school will receive further funding, children can remain on packed lunches if you wish.

If you think your family could qualify the process is now simple as the school office can now do all the checks for you and send the form to the local authority. Also due to the introduction of Universal Credit once you qualify for free school meals now your entitlement will remain in place even if your circumstances change until the roll out of Universal Credit is complete.

We want to make sure that we are providing all children with the best education and support we can. With increasingly tight school budgets this is one way parents can help. Registering for free meals could also raise an extra £1,320 for our school to fund valuable support like extra tuition, additional teaching staff or after school activities.

Your child is eligible for free school meals if you’re in receipt of one of the following benefits:

• Universal Credit with an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400.

• Income Support

• Income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance

• Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

• Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

• The guarantee element of Pension Credit

• Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for the four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

• Child Tax Credit (with no Working Tax Credit) with an annual income of no more than £16190

This additional money is available from central government for every child whose parent is receiving one of the benefits listed above. Please complete this form and return to school by Friday 5th April.

**Remember every form returned could earn the school an extra £1320!!**All information provided complies with the General Data Protection Regulations and the information will be used for the purpose of processing your application for free school meals and will be shared with the local council.

Many thanks for your support

J Butterworth

Headteacher