



Free School Meals Update

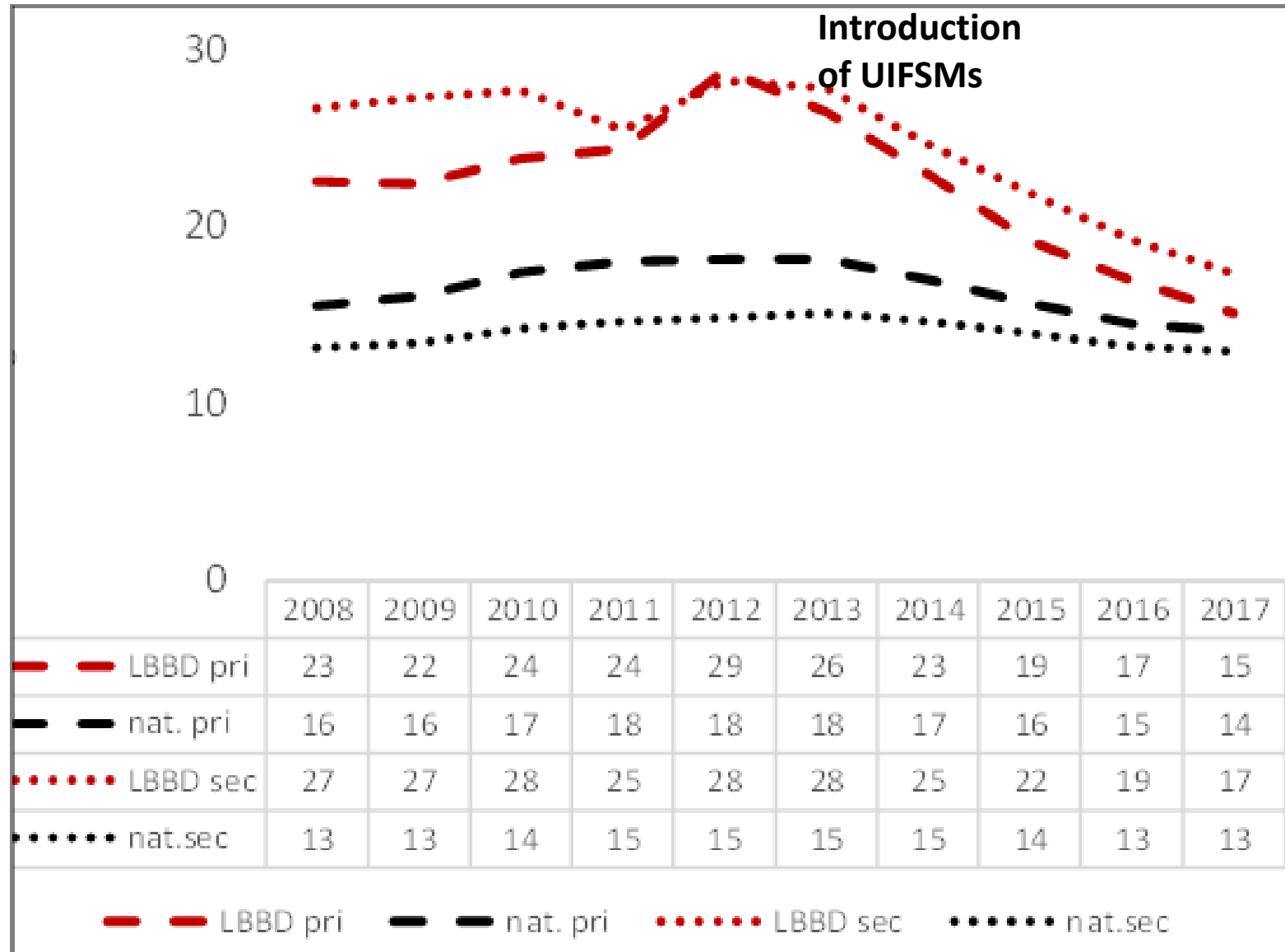


Figure 1: % Applying for and receiving FSM.

Challenges

Decreasing
FSM take up



- Loss of funding for schools
- Risk of poorer outcomes for disadvantaged children
- Greater expense to low income or struggling families
- Challenges may increase after end of Universal Credit transition period?

Barriers
to claiming



- No true data on those who are eligible but not in receipt of FSM
- In work poverty
- Welfare reform
- English not first language
- Asylum and immigration status
- Cultural barriers
- Bullying
- Receipt of Universal Infant Free School Meals



Employment has risen but so has underemployment and insecure employment.

In-work poverty is on the rise and the cost-of-living crisis continues to worsen.

This might be leading to some families losing out on FSM eligibility despite feeling the pressures of day-to-day budgeting.

Benefits

For Schools:

11 extra Primary students a year
(combined effect of FSM and Pupil
Premium) = Up to **£21,200** extra funding

This could fund a range of educational
resources or Teaching Assistant hours



For Families:

For each child on FSM, up to **£440** every year

For a family with three children, over the
course of primary and secondary school, this is
a saving of around **£12k**

This could contribute to a mortgage deposit,
pay off a loan shark or fix the boiler when it
breaks; a big difference!



The Process

Cross-sector Working Group



Data investigation



Engagement with partners



Evaluation



Joined-Up Approach

Council

- Community Solutions Universal Service is signposting residents eligible for FSM and supporting them with applications.
- Homes and Money Hub has incorporated FSM into their conversations with residents.

Communications

- A simple and attractive FSM leaflet has been designed and is being used by all partners.

Job Centre Plus

- Incorporated FSM into conversations with relevant benefit claimants.
- Added a link to FSM applications in Universal Credit work journals.

Schools

- Piloted the Excel tool to help identify eligible families not claiming FSM.
- Engaged with parents about FSM via a range of universal activities e.g. parents evenings, Christmas fairs, parent workshops, parent coffee mornings, hot school meals parent-child taster events (in collaboration with BDT Catering Services), transitions events, school plays, newsletters and online messaging.
- Undertook targeted follow up engagement with potentially eligible families.

East London Housing Partnership (ELHP)

- Incorporated FSM into their case handling process.



We promised to report on our progress following the end of Q4 2018/19

The Tool

The priority for schools was:

- **Identifying children who are not receiving FSM but are eligible - and engaging with their parents.**

Our conversations with some schools led us to design a prototype tool that, along with schools' engagement with parents, can make it easier to identify children who are potentially eligible for FSM.

This is achieved by tracking those in receipt of FSM as well as those who self-identify as not eligible. IDACI (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index) scores were incorporated in the tool to help schools prioritise parental engagement.

The Tool

[FSM Clean and Protected \(002\).xlsx](#)

Do you know about **free** school meals?

- ✓ You could save up to £450 each year*
- ✓ Your child could receive a free, hot, healthy meal every week day
- ✓ For every successful school meal application, your child's school will receive up to an extra £1,900 to support education

*This is an example of savings based on a school lunch costing £2.30.

If you receive any of the following benefits, your child may be eligible for **Free School Meals**:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support
- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on.

The application takes just a few minutes.

Remember:

- Even if your child previously received Universal Infant School Meals, you still need to apply to be considered for Free School Meals

Remember:

- You can make an application for each of your children, saving you money and providing your child's school much needed additional education funding

To find out more and make an application, follow this link www.lbbd.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals



Update

Borough level FSM take up

- Between April 2018 and April 2019 FSM take up increased from 6212 to 8196 children.
- This pilot project plus other actions by DWP, Community Solutions and Elevate (FSM administration) have likely contributed to some of this increase.



Increases in schools

School	Months working on the FSM project	No. of parents engaged	No. activities to engage parents	No. of FSM applications submitted	No. successful FSM applications	% of successful applications of those submitted	No. children identified through Excel tool
School A	4 months		10		8		
School B	4 months	191	6		32		15
School C	4 months	30	3	27 (5)	5 (1)	19%	1
School D	4 months	30	2	16	7	44%	12
School E	3 months	540	2	54	27	50%	3
School F	2 months	50	1	10	5	50%	10
Total		841	24	107	84		41

- Schools reported this data. Successful applications may include some applications as a result of non project-related activities but this contribution is difficult to quantify.
- Schools tailored their approaches in the project e.g. some used the Excel tool routinely and some less so.



Schools' funding

School	Months working on the FSM project	No. successful FSM applications	ISB FSM Funding Total Annual Additional Funding	ISB Ever 6 Total Annual Additional Funding (for next 6 years)	Pupil Premium Total Annual Funding (for next 6 years)	Total	Savings for families (based on a school lunch costing £2.10)
School A	4 months	8	£3,973	£7,088	£7,480	£18,541	£3, 200
School B	4 months	32	£15,892	£19,504	£42,240	£77,637	£12,750
School C	4 months	5 (1)	£2,483	£3,048	£6,600	£12,131	£2,000
School D	4 months	7	£3,476	£4,267	£9,240	£16,983	£2,800
School E	3 months	27	£13,409	£16,457	£35,640	£65,506	£10,750
School F	2 months	5	£2,483	£3,048	£6,600	£12,131	£2,000
Total			£41,717	£53,411	£107,800	£202,929	£33,500

Schools' funding (cont.)



	No. successful FSM applications	ISB FSM Funding	ISB Ever 6	Pupil Premium	Maximum total additional funding to schools
Maximum 6 year additional funding	84	£125,152	£320,466.18	£646,800	£1,092,419

Schools' funding slides - footnotes

Pupil census data is used to calculate the annual notional DSG allocation for the Local Authority. This funding is then passported to school using the national funding formula.

Pupils who have triggered FSM will continue to attract funding for the next six years through Pupil Premium and the Ever 6 element DSG.

The PPG per-pupil for 2019 to 2020 is as follows:

Disadvantaged pupils	Pupil premium per pupil
Pupils in year groups Reception to Year 6 recorded as Ever 6 free school meals (FSM)	£1,320
Pupils in Years 7 to 11 recorded as Ever 6 FSM	£935
Looked-after children (LAC) defined in the Children Act 1989 as one who is in the care of, or provided with accommodation by, an English local authority	£2,300
Children who have ceased to be looked after by a local authority in England and Wales because of adoption, a special guardianship order, a child arrangements order or a residence order	£2,300
Service children	Pupil premium per pupil
Pupils in year groups Reception to Year 11 recorded as Ever 6 service child or in receipt of a child pension from the Ministry of Defence	£300

APT Funding Rates:						
Description	Primary amount per pupil	Secondary amount per pupil	Eligible proportion of primary NOR		Eligible proportion of secondary NOR	
FSM	496.6368	496.6368	3917.567801		2387.907966	
FSM6	609.5088	886.0452	6896.471904		5721.564141	

Learning and outcomes – Schools

- A universal approach which engages all parents to raise awareness of FSM and check eligibility, followed by targeted engagement for families who might be eligible appears the best approach
- Dedicated staff responsibility for raising awareness of FSM and (where appropriate) providing support with applications is important
- Regular in-year engagement about FSM at events rather than relying on annual engagement is worth the investment
- Regularly engaging parents about the FSM eligibility criteria provides schools with a more accurate view in-year of parental eligibility. This enables schools to better deploy resources around parental engagement.



Learning and outcomes – Overall

- Supporting FSM take up should be treated as a challenge for the whole system of local public services. Each touch point is a potential opportunity to ascertain eligibility and support FSM application
- Using the right language influences how many families choose to apply. Inclusive, universal language pertaining to the health benefits of school meals, additional funding for schools and in some cases savings for families are much stronger motivators than benefit eligibility



Learning and outcomes – Overall

- A range of myths and misconceptions surrounding FSM needs addressing by all organisations. Improving awareness of FSM across organisations and amongst families enables better engagement
- One or two simple and attractive communications and marketing resources about FSM can make a difference



Next Steps

- An impact report is being written up. It will be shared shortly with project partners and all schools
- Schools are encouraged to consider how they can use learning from the project to support FSM engagement within their school community
- Other partners in the project will continue to implement and embed the proposals for their services and organisations

