

EDUCATION BUREAU
CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM NO. 80/2025

From :	Permanent Secretary for Education	To :	Supervisors and heads of government and aided primary schools (including special schools) and primary schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme
Ref. :	EDB1146-2020-8030-9060-00001-P001		
Date :	22 May 2025		

**Provision of Free Lunch at Schools for Primary Students from Low-income Families
2025/26 School Year**

Summary

This circular memorandum invites the continued application of whole-day government and aided primary schools (including special schools) and primary schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) for funding under the programme of Free Lunch at Schools in the 2025/26 school year.

Background

2. The Community Care Fund has launched the programme since the 2011/12 school year on a pilot basis to provide free lunch at schools for students in receipt of full grant under the Student Financial Assistance (SFA) Schemes in whole-day government and aided primary schools (including special schools) and primary schools under the DSS. Starting from the 2014/15 school year, the provision of free lunch at schools has been incorporated into the Government's regular assistance programme. The implementation details remain essentially the same as in the previous years and are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

Details

Eligible Students

3. The funding will be disbursed to participating schools by the Education Bureau (EDB) direct. Participating schools should pay lunch expenses on behalf of Primary 1 to Primary 6 students meeting all of the following requirements:

- (i) receiving full grant under the SFA Schemes in the 2025/26 school year;
- (ii) studying in a whole-day government/aided primary school (including any of the special schools) or a primary school under the DSS; and
- (iii) having lunch arranged by the schools they attend¹.

4. As stated in paragraph 3, students eligible for the programme should also be recipients

¹ Schools have various modes of arranging lunch for students, e.g. selecting lunch suppliers for students in accordance with the guidelines on tendering and procurement or hiring staff to provide lunch for students, etc. Should students meeting the criteria stated in paragraphs 3(i) and (ii) bring their self-packed lunch to school, participating schools will not be provided with the funding for these students.

of full grant under the SFA Schemes. Schools are therefore invited to remind parents to submit applications for the SFA Schemes at their earliest convenience so that they can submit to the schools the Notification of Result for Assessment of Eligibility 2025/26 or Eligibility Certificate 2025/26 issued by the Student Finance Office of the Working Family and Student Financial Assistance Agency in a timely manner, and the schools can make payment for lunch expenses on behalf of eligible students. Since it is a common practice to make pre-payment for lunch expenses, to minimise enquiries from parents, we encourage schools to liaise with their lunch suppliers on pre-payment arrangements and refund arrangements to shorten the time between students' receipt of the above documentary proof and the pre-payment for lunch expenses. For details, please refer to the "Frequently Asked Questions" on EDB webpage.

5. When considering lunch options, apart from requiring lunch suppliers to provide healthy, balanced and substantial meals, schools should request the offer of diversified food options to cater for students' individual needs (such as those out of health, religious or cultural reasons, etc.).

Disbursement and Accounting Arrangements

6. The funding will be disbursed to participating schools in two instalments. The first instalment in late August 2025 will be based on the estimated number of full grant recipients under the SFA Schemes of each school, and the daily lunch expenses and the number of days with school lunch arrangements as reported by the school in the Application Form. When disbursing the second instalment for non-government primary schools in late December (in April 2026 for government primary schools to tie in with the prevailing accounting arrangements), we will adjust the amount of provision according to the latest number of full grant recipients under the SFA Schemes in each school. Under special circumstances (such as the admission of additional eligible students in the middle of the school year), schools may initiate an application to EDB for further funding adjustment.

7. Participating schools should verify the balance of the funding received at the end of the school year. Surplus should not be carried forward to the next school year and must be returned to EDB, while deficit will be made up by EDB. Detailed arrangements will be announced under separate cover in June 2026. For audit purpose, schools are required to keep relevant receipts, which should indicate the amount of expenditure, the number of beneficiary students, the lunch expenses and the number of days with school lunch arrangements.

8. The funding provided for Free Lunch at Schools serves a specific purpose and participating schools should prepare a separate ledger for it. Aided primary schools and primary schools under the DSS should observe the requirements as stipulated in relevant circular memorandums and their annexes calling for submission of audited annual accounts to EDB for scrutiny. For government primary schools, the funding will be disbursed in the form of budget allocation. The expenditure should be charged to a specified account and should not exceed the allocation in the respective financial years.

Related Issues

9. To help schools cope with the additional administrative and clerical work arising from the implementation of various initiatives, in particular work relating to poverty alleviation (including the programme of Free Lunch at Schools), EDB has provided an additional recurrent cash grant equivalent to the salary of a Clerical Assistant for public sector primary schools since the 2014/15 school year. For details, please refer to [EDB Circular No. 10/2014](#).

Application

10. Schools are invited to complete and submit the electronic Application Form via the Common Log-On System (<https://clo.edb.gov.hk>) (Common Log-On System > e-Form Submission System > e-Forms Application > Application Form for Provision of Free Lunch at Schools for Primary Students from Low-income Families) **on or before 23 June 2025**. Schools may make use of the delegation function in the e-Form Submission System to delegate staff to assist in the application. Alternatively, schools may complete and return the attached Application Form to the Student Special Support Section ~~Kwun Tong Office~~ of EDB on or before the aforementioned deadline.

Enquiries

11. To facilitate schools in handling parents' enquiries, we have devised a set of "Frequently Asked Questions" in light of our implementation experience. For details, please visit EDB webpage (<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/freelunch>). For enquiries, please contact the Student Special Support Section ~~Kwun Tong Office~~ of EDB at ~~3850-2035 2892 6656~~.

Cliff HUI
for Permanent Secretary for Education

Encl.

c.c. Heads of sections – for information

APPLICATION FORM

(All whole-day government and aided primary schools (including special schools) and primary schools under the Direct Subsidy Scheme are requested to return this Application Form to the Education Bureau by fax or by post or return the electronic Application Form via the Common Log-On System **on or before 23 June 2025**)

To: Permanent Secretary for Education
[Attn: Student Special Support Section]
Education Bureau
Room 1141, 11/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong
(Fax No.: 3107 1306)

Provision of Free Lunch at Schools for Primary Students from Low-income Families 2025/26 School Year

My school **will /will not*** participate in the captioned programme (***please delete as appropriate**).
For participating schools, please complete Part A of the Application Form; for non-participating schools, please complete Part B.

Part A

My school will duly inform parents of the programme of Free Lunch at Schools, in particular the requirements for provision of free lunch at schools for eligible primary students as set out in Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 80/2025. Details are as follows:

(Please put a "✓" in the appropriate box and fill in the required information.)

- (1) My school will adopt the following mode of arranging lunch for students at school:
- (i) ☐ My school has complied with the existing guidelines on tendering and procurement for the selection of lunch suppliers.
 - (ii) ☐ My school has hired staff to provide lunch for students.
 - (iii) ☐ Others (please specify: _____)
- (2) The price per lunch for a student in the 2025/26 school year is as follows (*if different prices are charged for different groups of students, such as junior/senior primary or local/non-Chinese speaking students, please enter the respective prices; for standard pricing, please indicate the price as Price 1.*):
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|----------------------------------|---|-----|--|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| Price 1 (target students: _____) |) | HKD | <table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table> | | | | | • | <table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table> | | | | |
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| Price 2 (target students: _____) |) | HKD | <table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table> | | | | | • | <table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table> | | | | |
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- (Please indicate the price stated in the contract with the lunch supplier or the price that parents are informed of under other modes of lunch arrangement.)
- (3) The estimated number of days with provision of free lunch at schools (**Note:** the number of days with school lunch arrangements may be different from the number of school days):
- (i) from September 2025 to December 2025 (to March 2026 for government primary schools):
_____ days; and
 - (ii) from January 2026 (from April 2026 for government primary schools) to July 2026:
_____ days.

Part B

My school will NOT participate in the captioned programme. The main reason is as follows:

Signature of Supervisor: _____

Name of Supervisor: _____

Name of School: _____

School Code:

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Teacher/Staff-in-charge: _____

Telephone No.: _____

Fax No.: _____

School Email Address: _____

Date: _____

School
Chop

**Provision of Free Lunch at Schools for Primary Students
from Low-income Families Application Form
Personal Information Collection Statement**

Purpose of Collection

1. The personal data provided by you in this form will be used by EDB for one or more of the following purposes:
 - (a) Activities relating to the processing, authentication and counter-checking of the application for funding under the programme of Free Lunch at Schools;
 - (b) Activities relating to matching of the personal data with the database of other relevant Government bureaux/departments in connection with the processing, authentication and counter-checking of the application mentioned in (a) above;
 - (c) Activities relating to matching of the personal data within the database of EDB for purposes of verifying/ updating records of EDB;
 - (d) Activities relating to training and development including invitation of participation in programmes/activities, applications for reimbursement of course fees, assessment of nominations, awards and scholarship, and monitoring of attainment progress;
 - (e) Activities relating to the processing and vetting of applications for, and disbursement of, funding/grants/ subsidies, and conducting of audits;
 - (f) Activities relating to compilation of statistics, research and Government publications; and
 - (g) Activities relating to the administration and enforcement of rules and regulations including the Education Ordinance (Cap. 279), its subsidiary legislation (such as the Education Regulations and the Grant/Subsidized Schools Provident Fund Rules) and the Codes of Aid.
2. The provision of personal data required by this form and during the processing of this form is obligatory. In the event that you do not provide those personal data, we may not be able to handle or further process the application.

Classes of Transferees

3. The personal data you provide will be made available to persons working in EDB. Apart from this, they may be transferred or disclosed to the parties or in the circumstances listed below:-
 - (a) other Government bureaux and departments for the purposes mentioned in paragraph 1 above;
 - (b) the school in which the form relates for the purposes mentioned in paragraph 1 above;
 - (c) where you have given your prescribed consent to such disclosure; and
 - (d) where such disclosure is authorised or required under the law or court order applicable to Hong Kong.

Access to Personal Data

4. You have the right to request access to and correction of your personal data held by EDB. Request for access or correction of personal data should be made in writing to Executive Officer (Student Special Support)12 at Student Special Support Section, Education Bureau, Room 1141, 11/F, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong or email to exosss12@edb.gov.hk.