



2013/0080764PODL

Rt Hon David Laws MP
Minister of State for Schools

Sanctuary Buildings 20 Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT
tel: 0370 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus

Jack Dromey MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

15 January 2014

Re Jack

Subject: The pupil premium

Thank you for your letter of 18 December, addressed to the Secretary of State, enclosing correspondence from your constituent, Mr John Line of [REDACTED]. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

The pupil premium is additional funding to support schools in raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and closing the gap between them and their peers. Pupils currently attract the pupil premium if they have been registered for free school meals (FSM) at any point in the last six years (known as 'Ever6 FSM') or are looked after children.

As Mr Line points out, the recent announcement that all infant pupils will be entitled to receive FSM from September 2014, will have implications for the way in which the pupil premium is allocated. However, funding for the financial year 2014-15 will not be affected by this change as the allocations are informed by School Census data collected in January 2014.

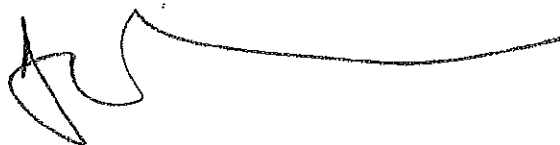
We are considering the possible implications for how the pupil premium is allocated in the longer term. Mr Line might like to know that three local authorities piloted approaches to free school meals between 2009 and 2011. In Durham and Newham a universal meal offer was made, meaning all primary school pupils received FSM, regardless of their financial background.

The evaluation of those pilots showed that families continued to provide the required information to prove eligibility even when not required to do so. The take-up of FSM increased among disadvantaged pupils – both those who had previously been entitled to FSM and those who were newly-entitled under the pilots. In addition, the report identified an increase in attainment for primary school pupils at key stages 1 and 2.

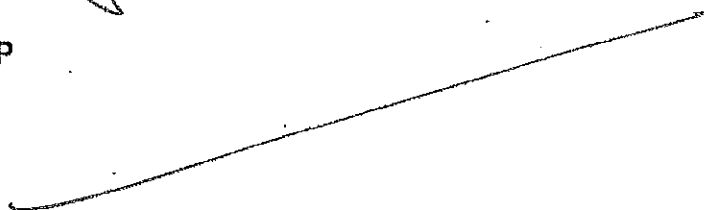
The information these areas provided on their approaches will inform guidance to schools in relation to the January 2015 census and allocation of the 2015-16 pupil premium grant.

Please thank Mr Line for writing on this important issue. I hope that he finds this response helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DL', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

David Laws MP

A long, thin, slightly curved horizontal line in black ink, likely a second signature or a decorative flourish.