

CONFIDENTIAL

Title of Report: School snack subsidy

Paper No: 69/15

Date: 8 April 2015

Report of: Director of Education

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to seek approval to subsidise the cost of providing a daily healthy school snack for children who live in low-income households.

2.0 Recommendation

That Honourable Members approve the provision of a subsidy to low-income households upon application, in order that the children receive a daily healthy school snack

3.0 Additional Budgetary Implications

	2015/16	2016/17	Annual Recurring
Operating Budget	£2,400	£2,400	£2,400

4.0 Background

- 4.1** In line with health of the nation objectives, the school provides a daily healthy snack for all children. Parents currently pay for this provision. It costs £2 per week per child. Local suppliers help by providing snack items at cost. The school believes that this is not only convenient and offers value for money for parents, but most importantly it ensures that children receive a healthy school snack as opposed to the alternative of none or a sugary, unhealthy snack.
- 4.2** The UK government has an initiative called ‘free schools meals’ which parents apply for via application and would receive if their household income was lower than around £16,500. The proposal to subsidise school snacks in the Falkland Islands is based on the UK free school meals initiative.
- 4.3** In addition to the obvious health and educational benefits, there is another advantage of this subsidy. The performance and progress of the group of children who receive free school meals in UK is anonymously tracked in order to ensure that they are on track to meet their targets. This tracking is the same as tracking any other group of children in school, i.e. those who are gifted and talented, those who have special educational needs, boys, girls, those who are looked after by the state, etc.

It is an expectation of schools that this group of children is tracked. During the latest inspection, it was noted that Falkland's schools do not track this group of children. The reason why we do not is that we have no information on the household income of our families.

The Policy Department are able to tell us how many children currently live in low-income homes. They report that there are 60 children who live in households where the income is 60% of the FI median income £17,500 i.e. £10,500 (this is the benchmark most commonly used to represent poverty thresholds in the UK and EU). Some of the 60 will be below school age and the rest split between the schools, so the number of children this paper refers to is likely to be low, an estimated 25-30 in each school. We are unable to identify them from census information as it is confidential. This subsidy will create a means of identifying and tracking this group of potentially vulnerable children to ensure their best outcomes. After discussing this in relation to the Falklands context, inspectors agreed this was a credible attempt to track these children in order to be able to demonstrate that their needs are fully met.

- 4.4** Any system adopted needs to be kept simple to administer. Families in receipt of welfare benefit or working/childcare credit will be eligible under this scheme. Whatever method is investigated and decided upon, the costs for snack provision will remain similar.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1** The estimate for the maximum subsidy is based on £80 per year (£2 per week for 40 weeks) for snack provision for 30 children. This amounts to £2400.

6.0 Legal Implications

- 6.1** Rules must ensure this is fairly implemented.

7.0 Human Resources Implications

- 7.1** None