Maximising Pupil Premium - FSM Eligibility Checker – A Guide for Schools.

Introduction

LGfL has taken this initiative, at no cost to schools or LAs, with the aim of supporting schools in maximising income from Pupil Premium as well as promoting the wider benefits of free school meals. It is estimated £50m of Pupil Premium is unclaimed within the London region alone because parents do not check for eligibility.

The Free School Meal Checking Service is an online process where parents can check eligibility for free school meals, although it is not a requirement to accept free meals in order for the school to benefit from Pupil Premium.

What the service does for parents:

After entering a few details into the website, the online application process links to the Department for Education checking system linked to HMRC and DWP, and gives an immediate response.

This system is designed to reduce the need to apply in person for free school meals and improve the claims process for schools. Where there is an eligibility for free meals the school is able to process the application using the information submitted.

What the service does for schools:

As the government has now introduced free school meals for all children in Key Stage 1, it is more important than ever for schools to know how many pupils would otherwise be eligible for free meals. Pupil Premium enables schools to take on more staff, invest in additional equipment, resources and activities to benefit all their children.

Schools wishing to encourage applications can promote the online eligibility checker to parents by publicising the following web address: fsm.lgfl.net

After parents have submitted their details online, a suitably authorised school administrator will be able to facilitate the submission of claims by clicking on the 'Administrators' button and visiting the school administration section.

Each headteacher is an authorised school administrator by default but would normally nominate one or more staff members as additional administrators via this section of the site. Data will only be made available securely via this site. In order to use this service, schools already subscribing to LGfL need to ensure that MIS data is exported regularly using USO-AutoUpdate (autoupdate.lgfl.net)

The FSM checking service is provided by the London Grid for Learning and is available to parents of children attending schools which are served by LGfL. An electronic copy of this booklet is available at schools.lgfl.net

All submitted data is stored securely in compliance with the Data Protection Act. For additional information regarding data please see the privacy statement on the website.

Due to the nature of the data that is being collected, it is the headteacher who will be sent email notifications of entitlements from the system, until they have given administrator rights to member(s) of staff at their school; please refer to the Settings options within the Administrator area of the site.   It is recommended for audit purposes that the headteacher grants the release of the data to their Local Authority; again, please see Settings.

Getting started

To use the eligibility checker to its full potential your school will need to have set up the following services:

- ❖ AutoUpdate – contact Atomwide on 020 8255 5555 and select option 3 if not already implemented
- ❖ LA administrator – headteacher should permit the LA access to view their school's FSM data
- ❖ School administrators – headteacher should enable member(s) of staff to have administrator access
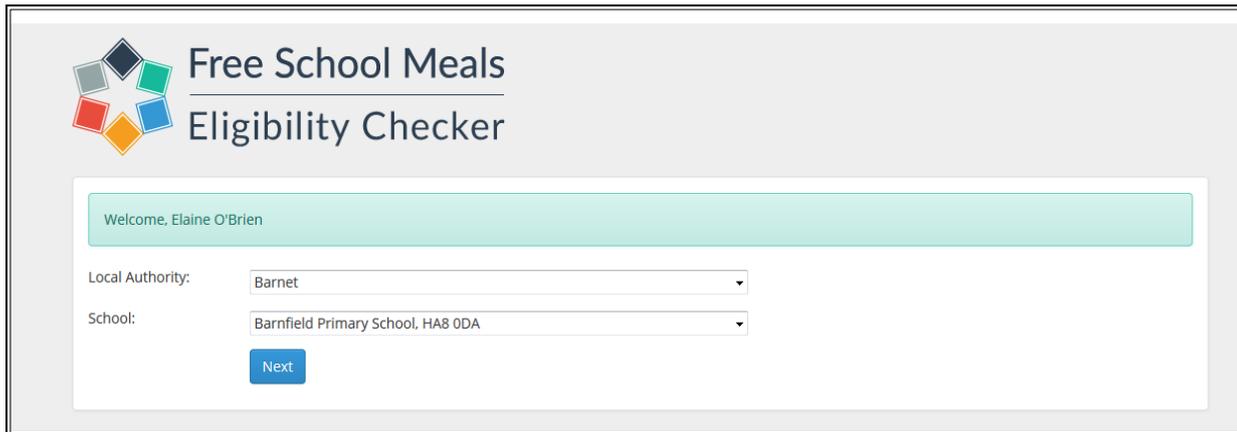
The Free School Meals Eligibility Checker website address is http://fsm.lgfl.net/
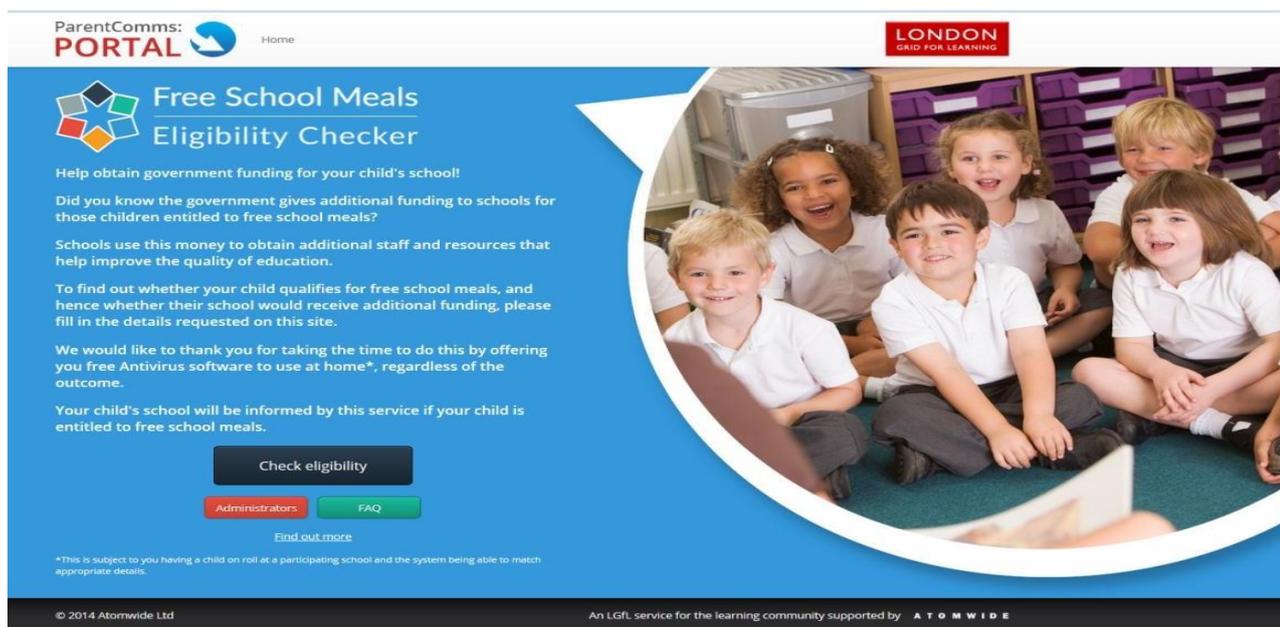
The headteacher or school administrator should enter the site via the red **Administrators** button and enter their USO login details into the login screen which will look like the image below.
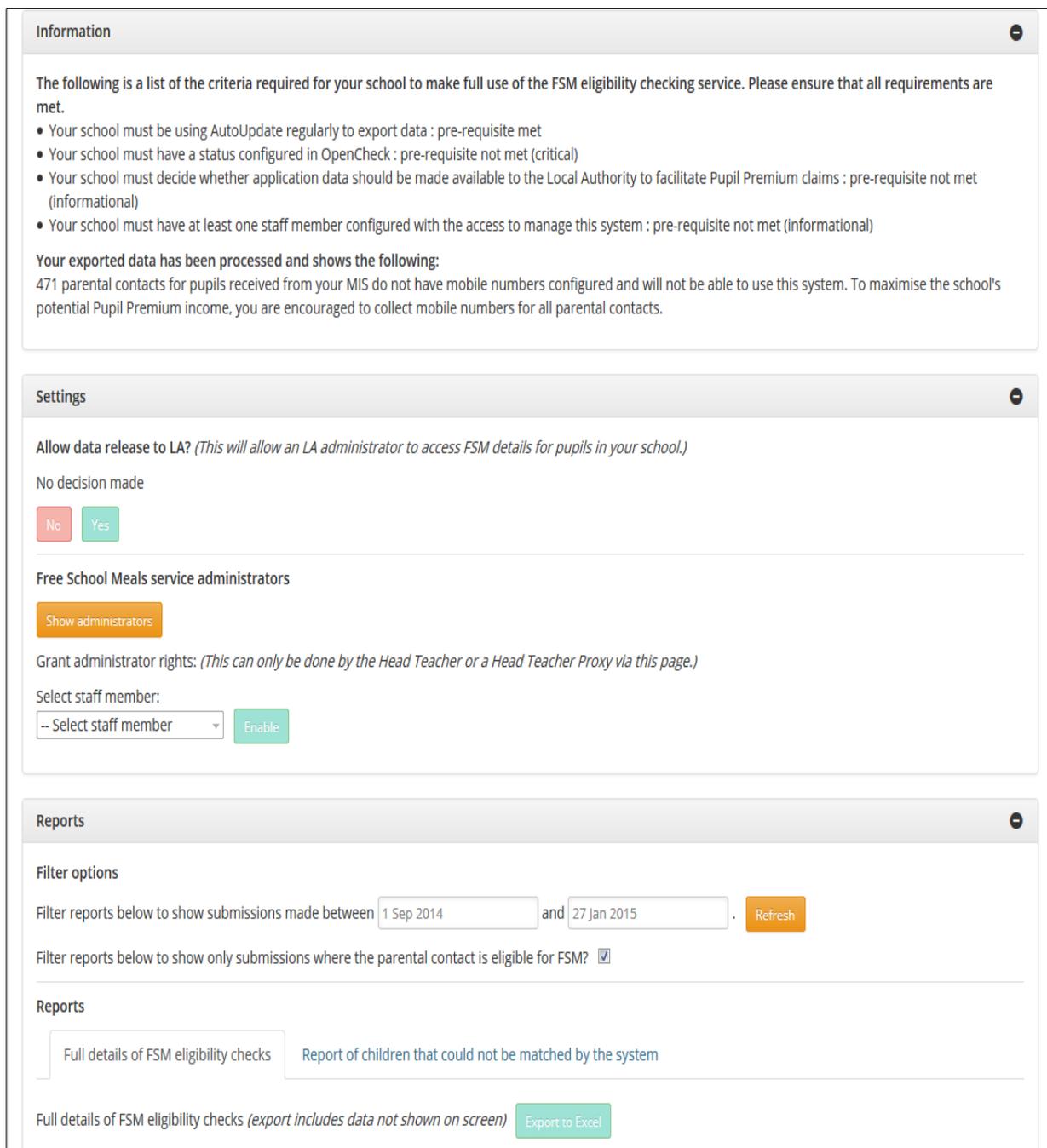
Using the drop-down menus (click on the down arrow) select the appropriate Local Authority and school name, as in the example below, and then click 'Next' to move on to the page which shows your set up and reports.

Free School Meals Eligibility Checker

Welcome, Elaine O'Brien

Local Authority: Barnet

School: Barnfield Primary School, HA8 0DA

Next

There are 3 sections on this page - **Information, Settings and Reports**.

Information ⊖

The following is a list of the criteria required for your school to make full use of the FSM eligibility checking service. Please ensure that all requirements are met.

- Your school must be using AutoUpdate regularly to export data : pre-requisite met
- Your school must have a status configured in OpenCheck : pre-requisite not met (critical)
- Your school must decide whether application data should be made available to the Local Authority to facilitate Pupil Premium claims : pre-requisite not met (informational)
- Your school must have at least one staff member configured with the access to manage this system : pre-requisite not met (informational)

Your exported data has been processed and shows the following:

471 parental contacts for pupils received from your MIS do not have mobile numbers configured and will not be able to use this system. To maximise the school's potential Pupil Premium income, you are encouraged to collect mobile numbers for all parental contacts.

Settings ⊖

Allow data release to LA? *(This will allow an LA administrator to access FSM details for pupils in your school.)*

No decision made

No   Yes

Free School Meals service administrators

Show administrators

Grant administrator rights: *(This can only be done by the Head Teacher or a Head Teacher Proxy via this page.)*

Select staff member:

-- Select staff member   Enable

Reports ⊖

Filter options

Filter reports below to show submissions made between 1 Sep 2014 and 27 Jan 2015 .   Refresh

Filter reports below to show only submissions where the parental contact is eligible for FSM? ☑

Reports

Full details of FSM eligibility checks   Report of children that could not be matched by the system

Full details of FSM eligibility checks *(export includes data not shown on screen)*   Export to Excel

Information

School administrators and headteachers will be able to see if their school has met the pre-requisites and system configurations to enable the process to run smoothly.

> **Information**   ⊖
>
> The following is a list of the criteria required for your school to make full use of the FSM eligibility checking service. Please ensure that all requirements are met.
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> Your exported data has been processed and shows the following:
> 471 parental contacts for pupils received from your MIS do not have mobile numbers configured and will not be able to use this system. To maximise the school's potential Pupil Premium income, you are encouraged to collect mobile numbers for all parental contacts.

AutoUpdate and OpenCheck are services provided by LGfL supported by Atomwide and are critical to the running of this service. Contact Atomwide (020 8255 5555 x 3) to find out more information if you do not already have these in place.

If your school does not have these set up, the statements will read:
- Your school must be using AutoUpdate regularly to export data : pre-requisite not met (critical)
- Your school must have a status configured in OpenCheck : pre-requisite not met (critical)

If your school has these set up, the statements will read:
- Your school must be using AutoUpdate regularly to export data : pre-requisite met
- Your school must have a status configured in OpenCheck : pre-requisite met

If the headteacher has not given their Local Authority access nor set up any of their staff members, the statements will read:

- Your school must decide whether application data should be made available to the Local Authority to facilitate Pupil Premium claims : pre-requisite not met (informational)
- Your school must have at least one staff member configured with the access to manage this system : pre-requisite not met (informational)

If the headteacher has given their Local Authority access and set up any of their staff members, the statements will read:

- Your school must decide whether application data should be made available to the Local Authority to facilitate Pupil Premium claims : pre-requisite met
- Your school must have at least one staff member configured with the access to manage this system : pre-requisite met

The FSM Eligibility Checker uses mobile phone numbers from the school's MIS data to match children to parents. The following statement will be displayed:

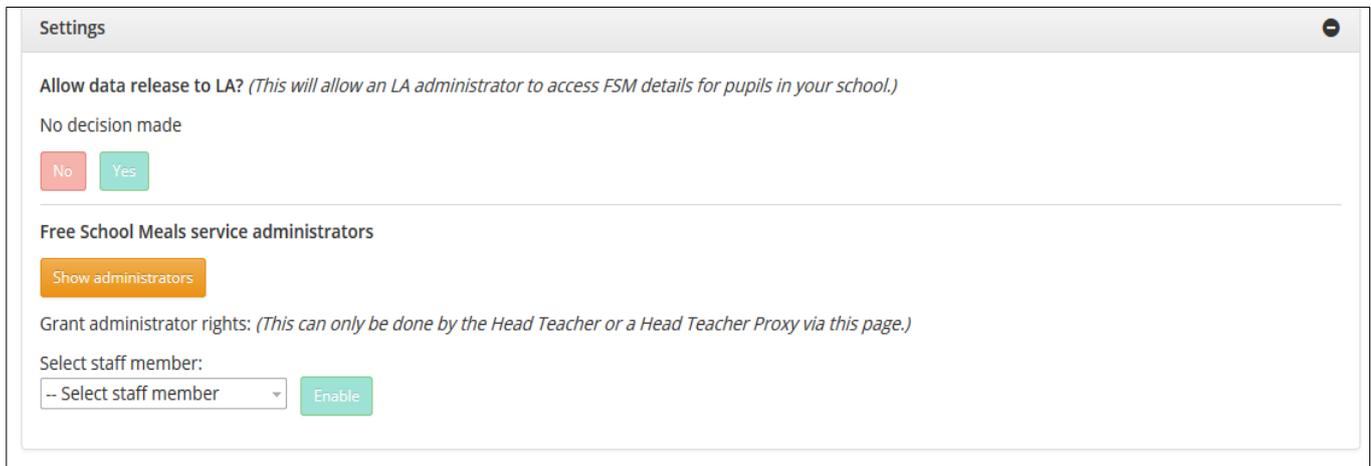**Your exported data has been processed and shows the following:**
XX parental contacts for pupils received from your MIS do not have mobile numbers configured and will not be able to use this system. To maximise the school's potential Pupil Premium income, you are encouraged to collect mobile numbers for all parental contacts.

Settings

The headteacher is responsible for updating the settings. When the settings have been updated the statements displayed in the 'information' section will be updated.

It is recommended for audit purposes that the headteacher grants the release of the data to their Local Authority.

To do this the headteacher will need to select the 'Yes' button.

To add school administrators the headteacher must select the down arrow on the 'select staff member' dropdown box, a list of staff members will be displayed, select the name of the member of staff requiring administrator access, then select the 'Enable' button. Repeat this for every staff member requiring administrator access.

At any time you can view the administrators that have been set up by the headteacher for your school, select the 'show administrators' button. All administrators that have been given access will be displayed.

Reports

There are several reports that a child may appear on during this process, which are dependent on the child's school data exports, what other USO-integrated services the school uses and whether the parent has used the eAdmissions service and has accepted a place. Use the 'export to excel' facility if you wish to view the full data.

Filter reports below to show only submissions where the parental contact is eligible for FSM?

If the school administrator/headteacher wish to filter out the parents that are not eligible, then you will need to tick the box.

Full details of FSM eligibility checks *(export includes data not shown on screen)*

If a parent successfully links their child-link and has requested to notify the School, the child's details will be displayed on the screen.

Child's first name	Child's last name	Child's date of birth	Parent's first name	Parent's last name	Eligible?	Submission date	Want FSM?
■	■	4 Apr 2004	■	■	NO	17 Nov 14 22:33	NO
■	■	27 Feb 2005	■	■	YES	11 Nov 14 07:46	YES
■	■	8 Mar 2008	■	■	NO	7 Nov 14 20:22	NO

If the parent is eligible for FSM an automated email will be sent to the school administrator/ headteacher to inform them that a new person is known to be eligible.

A parent doing this would then be eligible for the free Antivirus software as their child is proven to be on roll at a relevant school.

Report of children that could not be matched by the system *(export includes data not shown on screen)*

If a parent could not link their child to your school, the details will appear on this report.

Child's first name	Child's last name	Child's date of birth	Parent's first name	Parent's last name	Eligible?	Submission date	Want FSM?
███	███	22 Dec 2005	███	███	YES	20 Jan 15 11:27	YES
███	███	30 May 2009	███	███	YES	20 Jan 15 11:25	YES
███	███	20 Dec 2009	███	███	NO	17 Nov 14 22:39	NO

If the parent is eligible for FSM an automated email will be sent to the school administrator/ headteacher to inform them that a new person is known to be eligible.

A parent in this position would then be eligible for the free Antivirus software as their child is proven to be on roll at a relevant school.

Other automated emails

If a school is not participating in the FSM service, the child may be linked or be a suggested link to the school.

In this instance if the parent is eligible for FSM, this will send an automated message to the headteacher, explaining that a parent linked with their school is eligible for FSM and explaining the nature of the service and what they need to do to obtain the relevant data.

If the child is linked, the parent would be eligible for the free Antivirus software.

Template letter for schools to send out to parents
– please copy and paste into your own school letter head

Dear Parent / Carer

Free School Meals and the Pupil Premium
From November 3rd a new 'Free School Meals / Pupil Premium Service' www.fsm.lgfl.net will be a web site where parents can quickly and easily check eligibility for free school meals and, if eligible, also gain welcome additional funding for their child's school, known as 'Pupil Premium'. If eligible, you are not obliged to accept the free school meals for your child if you wish to make other arrangements, but we do want to encourage applications as the additional funding gained would still benefit education provision at the school.

What the service does for parents:
After entering essential details into the web site, the online application process links to the Department for Education system for checking eligibility and gives an immediate 'yes' or 'no' response, and will notify the school.

This system is being provided to encourage parents to apply and take advantage of free school meals while at the same time increasing the benefit to schools from Pupil Premium funding, a substantial amount of which does not reach schools because not all parents who are eligible apply for free meals for their child.

By way of a 'thank you' to parents for taking part, and regardless of individual outcomes, The London Grid for Learning (LGfL) would like to provide parents of children attending LGfL-connected schools with Sophos Anti-Virus software, free of charge, to protect the computers used by pupils at home.

To gain access to this software there is a short registration process which will also give you access, if required, to other LGfL services and benefits that are available to your child's school. Please be assured there is no catch, no cost and no advertising. LGfL (a UK education charity set up in 2001 and owned by London's 33 local authorities) exists to support education and is leading this initiative to make it easier for parents to apply for free school meals and to encourage the drawdown of unclaimed Pupil Premium.

What the service does for schools:
As the government has now introduced free school meals for all children in Key Stage 1, it is more important than ever for schools to know the number of pupils for whom they can claim Pupil Premium funding. These funds enable schools to take on additional staff and invest in additional equipment, resources and activities to the benefit all children.

Please visit www.fsm.lgfl.net enter the necessary details and support this worthwhile initiative.

Yours etc