

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING  
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QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 5th OCTOBER 2026  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 12th OCTOBER 2026**

**Question**

“Will the Minister advise the costs of –

- (a) extending funded school meals to –
  - (i) all households earning whose combined income is less than £75,000;
  - (ii) single parent families in primary schools; and
  - (iii) single parent families in secondary schools; and
- (b) expanding the healthy start scheme to –
  - (i) all households earning whose combined income is less than £75,000;
  - (ii) single parent families in primary schools;
  - (iii) single parent families in secondary schools;
  - (iv) those families eligible for income support had they lived on the Island for over 5 years; and
  - (v) all pregnant women and children under 5?”

**Answer**

The costs set out below are indicative estimates and are based on a number of assumptions, as the Government does not routinely hold all of the data required to model these scenarios precisely.

- (a) Extending funded school meals
  - (i) All households with a combined income below £75,000

Based on Statistics Jersey data, it is estimated that 60-65% of households with children have a combined income below £75,000. Given that approximately 36% of primary school meals are currently provided free of charge, extending eligibility to this group is estimated to reduce income to the school meals service by approximately £260,000 per annum, assuming current meal uptake remains unchanged. We do not currently hold data for Secondary schools and are therefore unable to forecast this cost.

- (ii) Single-parent families in primary schools
- (iii) Single-parent families in secondary schools

The 2021 Census identified approximately 1,780 single-parent households with dependent children, with an average of 1.7 children per single-parent household. As data is not readily available on the age of children in these households, it is not possible to provide separate estimates for primary and secondary pupils. Assuming all single-parent families not already eligible were provided with funded school meals, and that current uptake rates remained unchanged, the estimated reduction in income to the school meals service would be approximately £1.5 million per annum but will range from £1m to £2m depending on the variability within the assumptions underlying this estimate.

(b) The Healthy Start scheme is administered by Public Health and the answers below have been provided on behalf of the Minister for Health and Social Services.

*“The estimates below should be interpreted with caution as they are based on available administrative and survey data, which have limitations for some population groups (see below). All cost estimates assume 100% uptake and full use of vouchers by all individuals meeting the eligibility criteria. Actual costs are likely to be lower and will depend on awareness, eligibility verification, uptake rates, and voucher utilisation”*

(i) Estimated annual cost: £11,868,064

(ii) Data is only currently collected by number of single parent households, we do not have data on how many children in different age ranges these families have.

For one child analysis (if single parent households have one child in this age range) this would be an estimated cost of: £451,610 per annum

For two child analysis (if single parent households have two children in this age range) this would be an estimated cost of: £903,219 per annum

(iii) Data is only currently collected by number of single parent households, we do not have data on how many children in different age ranges these families have

For one child analysis: £436,883 per annum

For two child analysis: £873,766 per annum

(iv) This data is not available currently, as survey sample sizes are too small when extrapolating data stratified by both income and residency status. Work is being carried out to increase granularity of data, but this is ongoing and may take 2-3 years

(v) Annual costs estimated at circa £378,544 for all pregnant women to receive healthy start, and £2,288,926 for all children under 5.

Total combined estimated cost of this would therefore be:

£2,667,470 per annum

<sup>1</sup>The estimate for households with a combined income below £75,000 is based on existing school meals data and assumes that approximately 36% of children within this cohort already receive funded meals. The estimated cost therefore reflects only the additional meals that would need to be subsidised. By contrast, data is not available to identify how many children in single-parent households currently access school meals.

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As a result, the estimate for single-parent families has been calculated using the average number of children per single-parent household, based on Census data, multiplied by the standard meal cost. This approach is likely to overstate the additional cost when compared with the income-based estimate, as it does not account for children who may already be receiving funded meals.