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Dear childcare setting

The Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme: Implementation August 2021

We are writing to tell you about the new Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme which will operate from 1 August 2021, and which will replace the Nursery Milk Scheme for childcare settings in Scotland. If your childcare setting is in either England or Wales, you will continue to be registered with the Nursery Milk Scheme and there is no need for you to do anything. You will be able to continue to claim from the Nursery Milk Reimbursement Unit as you do now.

However, if your childcare setting is in Scotland, you will need to know about the new Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme. This letter provides early information about the new Scheme, and we will provide more information in due course.

Background

Powers over Welfare Foods were devolved to Scotland through provisions in the Scotland Act (2016). Devolution has provided Scotland with an opportunity to establish and deliver its own scheme to further focus on improving children's health and nutrition and to tackle health inequalities. The new Scheme will promote the health benefits for children that regular consumption of dairy and fresh fruit and vegetables provide.

The Scheme was originally intended to start in August 2020 but was delayed because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The new Scheme is now planned start on 1 August 2021.

The Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack Scheme

The new Scheme will be delivered by local authorities who will provide direct and upfront funding for all pre-school day care and childminder settings which are registered with Care



Inspectorate; where children spend 2 or more hours per day; and where the settings have registered with their local authority to be part of the Scheme.

This means that settings will get their funding for the Scheme in advance so that they can use it to buy approved products for their children throughout the year. This is a key change from the current UK NMS, where settings need to purchase milk themselves and then claim for reimbursement.

The new Scheme will cover 189mls (1/3 pint) per child per day of:

- plain fresh cow's milk (whole milk for children over 1 year or semi-skimmed milk for children over 2 years) or first infant formula (for children under 12 months) ; or
- plain fresh goat or sheep milk (whole milk for children over 1 year or to include semi-skimmed milk for children over 2 years), or unsweetened calcium enriched non-dairy alternatives (excluding rice milk) for those children who cannot consume cow's milk because of medical, ethical or religious reasons
- **AND** a healthy snack portion (defined as either a portion of fruit or vegetables) per child per day

Transition: What do Scottish settings need to do now?

You do not need to do anything yet. If you wish to participate in the Scheme you will need to register with your local authority. Each setting will need to register in the local authority in which it operates, in the case of chains, registration must be where each individual setting is located. You will be contacted directly to advise when registration goes live. Once the new Scheme starts you will not be able to claim from the UK NMS any more.

To ensure there is no gap in provision for day care providers and childminders the following transition process has been agreed:

- Any milk provided to the children in your care up to and on 31 July 2021 will be funded by the UK NMS via the current claims and reimbursement model through the Nursery Milk Reimbursement Unit.
- Any milk provided to the children in your care on and after the 1 August 2021 will be the funded through the new Scottish Scheme.
- The DHSC and the Scottish Government have agreed that claims for milk provided to the children in your care up to and on the 31 July can be submitted to the UK NMS for 6 months.
- This means that you will need to make sure that you get your claims to the UK NMS to the Nursery Milk Reimbursement Unit before 31 January 2022, or you will not be able to receive reimbursement.

We would encourage you to make your final claims to the NMRU as soon after the 31 July 2021 as possible to allow a more streamlined transition.



How the new Scheme will operate

Local authorities will receive funding from the Scottish Government to meet the cost of the new Scheme. The Scheme will allow local authorities to establish registration and payment mechanisms to suit local needs. Light touch monitoring will provide assurance that children are receiving their intended benefit. The new scheme is intended to reduce the administrative burden on settings, which was a key theme in responses to the Welfare Foods Consultation 2018.

We will continue to work collaboratively with local government to develop proposals on the design and delivery of the Scheme. Further information on how to register and how and when the funding will be provided to you will follow in due course.

Monitoring and Reporting

The Scottish Government aims for financial monitoring and reporting that is proportionate and does not place undue administrative burden on settings. Local authorities will be responsible for completing monitoring procedures on an annual basis. Under the regulations, local authorities will have the power to ask settings to apply best practice and provide evidence and proof of purchases upon request by way of receipts, invoices, contracts etc. to correlate with the amount they are receiving through the Scheme. Local authorities will have control over an appropriate selection process not every setting will be subject to a monitoring procedure on an annual basis.

More details will be provided in due course, including how long you should keep your invoices, receipts and other evidence in case they are needed for checking purposes.

Next Steps

This letter is intended to provide an initial update and raise awareness of the new Scottish Milk and Health Snack Scheme.

Further information on the Scheme, including how to register, will be shared in due course. Please keep an eye on <https://www.gov.scot/policies/maternal-and-child-health/milk-and-healthy-snack-scheme/> where further updates will be shared.

**Scottish Milk and Healthy Snack
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Family Unit
Children and Families Directorate
Scottish Government**

**Healthy Foods Schemes Programme
Population Health Directorate
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