Twitter Thread by Brendan Clarke-Smith MP #StayAlert



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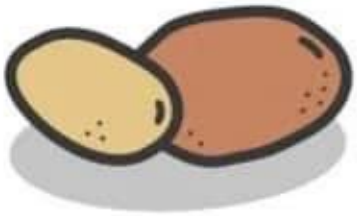
■ FREE SCHOOL MEAL PARCELS EXPLAINED

■ I've had a number of questions today about the parcels that have been going out for those who receive free school meals and aren't able to take up this entitlement in school at the moment.

Example food parcel for one child for five lunches



1 loaf of bread



2 baking potatoes



1 cucumber



3 large tomatoes



1 tin of sweetcorn in water



5 portions fresh fruit (apples, satsumas, bananas)



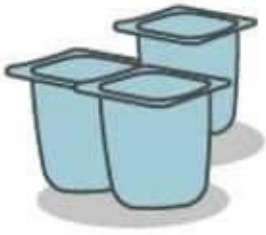
1 pack sliced, cooked ham AND 6 eggs



200g block of cheese



1 tin baked beans



3 x small reduced fat fruit yoghurts



1 litre semi skimmed milk

Source: LACA

BBC

■You may have seen photographs circulating on the internet showing a box of food that had been distributed by a contractor. It was claimed this had food in it that was meant to last ten days.

■ The food in the picture was actually only intended for 5 days, not 10, and cost £10.50 not £30 as has been suggested by some. The company responsible have however acknowledged that it could have been better.

■ The food is supposed to be a substitute for the lunch children would be missing in school - it's not intended to be food for the whole day and it is not intended to feed the rest of the family either.

There are however other schemes available for struggling families who need this as part of the Covid Winter Plan.

■ Schools get about £11.50 from the Government per week to provide school meals. Recognising the extra costs of distribution etc the Government has now increased this to £15 (the additional funding was announced on Friday). All this had to be done at very short notice last week.

■ Schools/Local Authorities can either use food parcels or they can use a national/local voucher scheme instead - they were given the choice and they still have a choice.

■ Schools/LAs then used their own contractors to distribute food. The pictures people saw are from one of those companies. These are not chosen by the Government.

■ The Government and LACA have set guidance as to what each food parcel should include and what people can expect to receive (pictured) at top of thread.

■ Parcels have been preferred by many as they also allow schools to keep in touch with some of the more vulnerable pupils from a contact perspective.

■ Schools cannot cook hot food and send it out as they do not have the relevant food safety certificates for this. This is why food is sent out that can be prepared at home and will last.

■ Finally, not just from a nutritional perspective, but an educational and health one, it is important that all children are able to return to school as soon as possible. That's why following the rules, testing and vaccinations are so important.

■ In the meantime, thank you to all of our school, local authority and private sector staff who are helping to get us through these challenging times - and thank you to the parents who are staying at home as part of these efforts too.