

Update May 29: After publication on May 28, we received a brief written response from the company providing the voucher program in England:

*“The Free School Meals Voucher scheme was established in record time and, while there were some early teething problems, significant improvements have been made that have transformed the efficiency and user experience of the scheme for schools and families. This has led to major performance improvements from April to May with: an 83% increase in the volume of eGift cards distributed to parents (forecast to be +100% by end of May); a 75% reduction in the number of inbound telephone calls to our helpdesk and 43% reduction in the number of inbound emails; and almost a complete elimination of queue times for schools and families to access the system. As a result of these improvements, since the scheme began, we have now distributed more than £110 million of eGift cards to families. In real life terms this equates to 7.34 million weekly allowances, and the equivalent of 36.6 million individual meals for eligible children.”*