

# **Education (Holiday Meal Payments) Bill**

[AS INTRODUCED]

## LEGISLATIVE COMPETENCE

At Introduction the Member in charge of the Bill, Mr Danny Baker, had made the following statement under Standing Order 30:

*“In my view the Education (Holiday Meal Payments) Bill would be within the legislative competence of the Northern Ireland Assembly.”*



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## BILL

TO

Make provision for direct payments to be made during school holidays to pupils entitled to receive free school meals; and for connected purposes.

**B**E IT ENACTED by being passed by the Northern Ireland Assembly and assented to by His Majesty as follows:

### **Modification of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986**

1. After Article 58(1)(b) of the 1986 Order insert the following paragraphs—

5 “(1A) Subject to Article 58(1B), the Authority shall, in accordance with arrangements approved by the Department, during the relevant periods provide a financial payment in lieu of milk, meals or other refreshment to the parent of a pupil who would normally be in attendance at a school.

(1B) The category of parents to whom Article 58(1A) applies is those persons whose children are in receipt of free school meals, determined in accordance with arrangements approved by the Department.

10 (1C) The Authority shall, in accordance with arrangements approved by the Department, make the financial payment to an eligible parent under Article 58(1B) by means of a payment to a bank account nominated by that parent.

15 (1D) The financial payment shall be equivalent to the cost of milk, meals or other refreshment a category of parent not eligible under Article 58(1B) would pay in respect of a pupil during school attendance times as published by the Authority from time to time, subject to any exercise of the power in (1F).

(1E) The Authority shall—

20 (a) maintain records of the financial payments made under Article 58(1A);

(b) share records maintained under Article 58(1E)(a) with the Department; and

(c) together with the Department, store records maintained under Article 58(1E)(a) for the minimum retention period as set out from time to time in the model Disposal of Records Schedule or such other guidance as may replace it.

5 (1F) The Department may make regulations to determine the financial payment payable under article 58(1A) in accordance with Article 58(1D).

(1G) The Department may make regulations to amend the definition of “the relevant periods”.

10 (1H) The Authority shall publish on the website of the Authority the current school meal charges payable under Article 58(1D).”

### Consequential amendments

2.—(1) In Article 2(2) of the 1986 Order—

after the definition of “the funding departments” insert—

15 ““the model Disposal of Records Schedule” means the schools model disposal of records schedule currently in operation;

“the relevant periods” means the Summer, Halloween, Christmas, mid-term and Easter, school holiday periods, (including the summer holiday at the end of a pupil’s final year at school), but does not include bank holidays and any other school closure;”

20 (2) In Article 59(1) after “under paragraph (1),” insert “(1A),”.

### Interpretation

3. In this Act—

“the 1986 Order” means the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986.

### 25 Short title and commencement

4.—(1) This Act may be cited as the Education (Holiday Meal Payments) Act (Northern Ireland) 2026.

(2) This section comes into operation the day after the Act receives Royal Assent.

30 (3) The other provisions of this Act come into operation on such day or days as the Department of Education may by order appoint, which shall be no later than the first day of the next relevant period.

35 (4) The Department of Education may by order make incidental, supplementary, transitional, transitory and saving provision in connection with the coming into operation of any provision of this Act.



# **Education (Holiday Meal Payments) Bill**

[AS INTRODUCED]

A Bill to make provision for direct payments to be made during school holidays to pupils entitled to receive free school meals; and for connected purposes.

Introduced by: Mr Danny Baker

On: 03 March 2026

Bill Type: Non-Executive Bill

## **ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS**

**An Explanatory and Financial Memorandum is printed separately as  
NIA Bill 27/22-27 EFM.**









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