

No, Gov't are NOT refusing to fund food for poor children

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The public aren't being told the FULL story on funding to feed children

(Section 1 of 2)

The 'social media humanitarians' are under a half-baked illusion that the Government will leave children starving —

You will have seen that the 'social media humanitarians' are peddling this half-baked view on the topic of free school meal (FSM) vouchers.

They're under the false illusion that just because Government won't extend funding for a FSM voucher scheme (to apply in the school holidays) that somehow children will go starving.

They're making out like this funding to help those struggling to feed kids won't be provided at all. But this is completely *UNTRUE*.

Is Government providing funding to help struggling families feed their children in the half-term and holidays? —

Yes! The fact of the matter is that funding to help feed children *IS* being (and will be) delivered.

Despite what many are saying, this is *NOT* a question of whether Government will or will not deliver funding to help feed poor children.

This is *instead* a question of *HOW* this funding is to be delivered. This along with how best to target and deliver such funding.

Ultimately, Government have chosen that this funding is better targeted and delivered via the benefits system, rather than by a blanket voucher scheme.

So how exactly will Government provide this funding (if not via a FSM voucher scheme through the half-term and holidays)? —

If the noisy minority actually bothered to research the facts, they'd realise that an extra £9.3 billion has been added to the welfare system to help 4 million households cover the temporary added costs of this pandemic.

It's this extra £9.3 billion that has allowed Government to:

- Increase Universal Credit by £1,040 a year
- Increase the Local Housing Allowance and create a £180 million fund to help struggling families with rent
- Create a £63 million fund for local councils so that they can provide more targeted welfare assistance (including help for families with food)
- Award an extra £16 million to food charities

Why have Government decided this method is better than the FSM voucher method? —

Because hundreds of thousands of the 1.4 million children who are eligible for FSM vouchers (during term time) now don't actually need them (including during the the half-term or holidays).

So Government have decided not to use FSM vouchers to help feed poor children (out of term time) so that they can answer two key questions:

1. How do we ensure that funding for those who don't necessarily need FSM vouchers is instead targeted towards those who genuinely *DO* need it the most (out of term time)?
2. How do we ensure that we don't increase long-term dependency on the state from those who don't necessarily need FSM vouchers?

That's exactly why Government have now decided to utilise the benefits system, local councils and food charities to answer these questions, rather than a voucher system.

How this works in practice —

Instead of receiving extra funding via FSM vouchers to help feed their children, poor families will instead see that this funding comes through via increases in their Universal Credit (i.e. their benefits).

Benefits (via Universal Credit) are means-tested and therefore react to a households drop in income and their increased financial needs much more effectively.

Furthermore, many of those struggling have much more complex issues than *solely* the ability to feed their children during this pandemic.

That's why giving this funding to local councils gives us the best chance of targeting those who are really under pressure (rather than giving it to a wasteful blanket voucher scheme).

As well as being able to identify and support those who need help feeding their children, local councils are *also* in a much better position to assist *directly* with other issues such as housing, safeguarding or childcare.

Overall, funding from Government is much more effectively harnessed by those in need through these channels, rather than by a (more short-sighted) blanket voucher scheme.

All this illustrates why it's totally *FALSE* to claim that (just because funding will not be extended for FSM vouchers out of term time) that funding is not being delivered to those in need.

It evidently *IS* being provided, and to a seriously more efficient and effective degree.

Is Government going to stop funding free schools meals during term time? —

No, free school meals will continue to be provided during term time.

In fact it's worth mentioning that because of the pandemic, Government has extended FSM eligibility to a further 50,000 children.

On top of this, the Government has expanded school breakfast club programmes during the pandemic, and introduced funding for holiday clubs.

This is hardly a sign that Government are refusing to help struggling young people and families.

Why then are so many people kicking up such a big fuss? —

It's because of the left wing 'I saw it on Facebook so it must be true' brigade. They're *COMPLETELY* misleading their friends and followers on free school meals, without any bother to consider the context.

Of course they've not intentionally set out to share misleading information. They've been misled themselves. But that's not to say they're not completely to blame.

What they've done is read (nothing more than) headlines, or tweets from disgruntled lefty sources, claiming that "the Tories have voted to let children starve".

However, rather than researching how little clout this claim carries (and without searching for any context) they immediately erupted with baseless anger and outrage.

These are the people who typically don't allow fact, research and context get in the way of an excuse to virtue signal on social media.

Don't be fooled by the noisy minority —

Despite the 'noise' coming from left wing 'social media humanitarians', I'm convinced that these people are in the minority.

I believe that the majority don't come to such reckless conclusions based on stupid angry claims posted on Facebook. At least they don't without first ensuring they're being told the *FULL* story.

Nevertheless, this noisy minority still manage to whip up a hell of a social media storm of lies and distortion. And often, their baseless claims do sometimes manage to gain traction, as they are now.

What I hope everyone will remember is that all these 'social media humanitarians' seem to share are conjectures. A conjecture is defined as "an opinion or conclusion formed on the basis of incomplete information".

What I'm trying to ask is NEVER take what these people say at face value. This noisy minority only ever share anger based on incomplete information.

They do this because they're too lazy to put in the time and effort to research, scrutinise and contextualise issues and events.

In fact, you should your own context and fact checking on EVERY claim that you see or hear. Including mine for that matter.

People might not like the Tories. Even I've been critical of my own party lately. But if they're going to explode, they need to at least ensure they're in possession of the *FULL* facts before doing so.

Other stupid claims, myths and issues that have come with this FSM palaver

(Section 2 of 2)

Claim: "MP's voted to give themselves a £3,000 pay rise, whilst they vote to let children starve" —

We've already dispelled the claim that MP's/Government have voted to "let children starve" (in Section 1). But the £3,000 MP pay rise vote claim is also a myth.

MP's did *NOT* vote to give themselves a pay rise. Nor are MP's *themselves* proposing that they have a pay rise.

MP pay rise proposals (such as this one) come from the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA). IPSA members are *not* serving MP's.

In reality, many MP's (from all sides of the House) described the IPSA's latest £3,000 pay rise proposal as stupid.

Myth on the legality of the FSM voucher scheme vote in the Commons —

Many people seem to believe that the vote on whether the FSM voucher scheme should be extended was legally binding. It wasn't.

What MP's were voting on was something called an 'Opposition Day motion'. The result of this specific vote has no influence on the law whatsoever (even if passed).

These specific kinds of votes are tabled by opposition parties. In this case, that party was Labour. And it was essentially a vote on whether MP's agree or disagree with a stated motion. Nothing more, nothing less.

In my view, these kinds of votes/motions should be well and truly scrapped. Especially because their results cause confusion amongst the public about what they really mean. This confusion is precisely what Labour want.

For example in the case of FSM vouchers, the motion did not include, explain or present the context of where funds were actually going to help feed poor children (as explained in Section 1).

These motions ignore wider context of an issue and neglect to present the *full* story. They're not like legally binding motions that influence acts of Parliament, as those are motions that are linked to the context of a whole piece of legislation.

CCHQ and the Government have totally failed to explain why this debate has been distorted —

It's been an absolute travesty that CCHQ and the Government have made next to no effort to dispel the TOTAL myth that they've voted to let children starve.

They've left Tory MP's struggling to explain where funding is truly going. They've left Conservative activists in the same situation.

You even have Tory voters being labelled as "scum" and "evil" because the party/Gov't won't explain how the left wing are misleading the public.

So come on, Boris! Get in front of those TV cameras and rubbish these claims that you are leaving children to starve. Do Conservatives (and the public alike) a favour.