

Changes to free school meal eligibility under Universal Credit

The eligibility criteria for free school meals have been changed. This letter explains the changes and how they might affect you.

What are the new eligibility criteria?

Children are entitled to receive free school meals if they or their parents or guardians receive any of the benefits below.

- Universal Credit, provided they have an annual net earned income not exceeding £7,400 (£616.67 per month)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by HMRC
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

I don't currently claim free school meals – what does this mean for me?

If you think you might be eligible for free school meals, submit a claim to your school. Your school should have a form you can use. The information you provide will be used to check if you are in receipt of a qualifying benefit and, if you are on Universal Credit, that your earnings do not exceed the threshold. If you claim Universal Credit, your earnings will be assessed from up to three of your last Universal Credit assessment periods.

If you are eligible, your school will be notified. Your child will receive free school meals and the school will receive extra funding.

We are asking all parents to complete the details on the form attached OR complete the online free school meals application form through their website which is www.link2ict.org/fsm even if you **DO NOT** currently receive free school meals.

Benefits of applying for free school meals

- Hot balanced meal every day
- 50% off any school trips (excluding overseas)

I am currently claiming free school meals – what does this mean for me?

Most people won't be affected by the new criteria. If you're currently claiming free school meals, but don't meet the new criteria, your child will continue to receive free school meals until the end of the Universal Credit rollout period. This will apply even if your earnings rise above the new threshold or if you stop being entitled to Universal Credit. The rollout period is currently scheduled to end in March 2022.

Once Universal Credit is fully rolled out, your child will keep their free school meal until the end of their current phase of education, i.e. primary or secondary.

Where can I get more information?

If you need any further information, please speak to a member of school staff or the local authority. You can also visit the free school meal website: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>.

All information provided is in line with the data protection act and will be completely confidential

Application for Free School Meals Online



Pupils Name in Full: _____

Year: _____

Form Group: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Please tick one

I have attached my documentation of proof declaring I am eligible for free school meals

I will be completing the online application form through the OFSM website www.link2ict.org/fsm

I agree to the school completing the online form for me and will provide the details below

Please complete all the sections below.

Your own name (not child): Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms (please circle)

First Name: _____ Surname: _____

Your date of birth (not child): _____

National Insurance Number or National Asylum Seekers Number: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

DECLARATION

The information I have given on this form is complete and accurate. I understand that my personal information is held securely and will be used only for school purposes. I agree to the school using this information to process my application for free school meals. I also agree to notify the school in writing of any change in my family's financial circumstances as set out in this form.

Signature of Parent/Carer: _____ Date: _____

Thank you for completing this form and helping to make sure our school is as well funded as possible.

How the information in this form will be used

The information you provide in this form will be used by the council to confirm receipt of one of the listed welfare benefits. Once this is confirmed, this helps to decide how much money your child's school will receive each year.

The information will also be used in relation to pupils in year 3 or above to decide whether they are eligible for free school meals.

You only need to complete this form once and it will last for the duration of your child's time at their current school. You should contact the school or local authority if you have a change in financial circumstances.

We are committed to ensuring that the personal and sensitive information that we hold about you is protected and kept safe and secure, and we have measures in place to prevent the loss, misuse or alteration of your personal information. We will use the information you provide to assess entitlement to free school meals. The information may also be shared with other Council departments to offer benefits and services.