

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLYING FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS

To be eligible for Free School Meals you must be in receipt of one of the following benefits:

- Child Tax Credit with an annual household income below the current annual threshold
- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Asylum Seeker
- Guaranteed Pension Credit
- Employment Support Allowance

Your child must be in full-time education in a state school from 'rising five' age onwards, including sixth form pupils at school. If your child attends a further education or tertiary college you will need to contact them directly.

Children who receive Income Support or Income Based Job Seeker's Allowance in their own right are also entitled to receive free school meals.

Children in the care of the local authority e.g. foster children, or of a voluntary organisation, cannot be considered for free school meals.

Please note: If you or your partner are in receipt of Working Tax credit you are not entitled to Free School Meals even if your annual income is below the current annual threshold

If you think you are eligible for your child to receive Free School Meals you will need to complete an application form which is available from your child's school office.

The form must be completed and signed by the person whose name appears on the benefit you are using for proof of eligibility.

When you submit your completed application form to the school office it must be accompanied by documentary evidence of your eligibility as follows:

Income Support

Proof required is sight of or a copy of:

- All pages of the letter from DWP/jobcentreplus dated within the previous four months (including the first page with your name and address details on)

Or

- A Post Office Account statement dated within the last four months showing your Income Support Payments

You will be required to provide evidence that you are still in receipt of this benefit at the beginning of each new term.

Employment Support Allowance

Proof required is sight of or a copy of:

- All pages of the letter from DWP/jobcentreplus dated within the previous four months (including the first page with your name and address details on)

Income Based Job Seekers Allowance

Proof required is sight of or a copy of:

- All pages of a letter showing the breakdown of jobseekers allowance dated within four months (to include the first page with your name and address details on and the page that states that your jobseekers allowance is **Income Based**)

You will be required to provide evidence that you are still in receipt of this benefit at the beginning of each new term.

Child Tax Credit

Proof required is sight of or a copy of:

- Complete TC602 HM Revenue and Customs Tax Credit Award for the current tax year.

You must provide sight of this form annually and it is also your responsibility to advise the school of any changes to your circumstances during the year that might affect your eligibility.

Guaranteed Pension Credit

Proof required is sight of or a copy of your M1000 Pension Credit Award Notice (dated within the last four months) which clearly shows that you are in receipt of the Guaranteed Element of the State Pension Credit

You will be required to provide evidence that you are still in receipt of this benefit at the beginning of each new term.

Asylum Seekers

Proof required is sight of or a copy of a NASS Support Notice or IS96 document including details of the authority providing support under part 1V of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. You will be required to supply:

- NASS reference number, port reference number, name of authority

Or if supported by Community and Adult Care Directorate,

- A letter from your designated office.

You will be required to provide evidence that you are still in receipt of this benefit at the beginning of each new term.

Please note: The school cannot provide Free School Meals without proof of your entitlement. It is your responsibility to make sure that this is provided at the time of application and at the times as stated above. Any meals provided for your child/children taken while waiting for evidence must be paid for. However this money can be refunded to you once your entitlement has been proved.