



## Free school meals

You could save up to £400 a year with free school meals for your child. School meals can also save you time and provide peace of mind that your child is enjoying a healthy, fresh, and nutritious meal at lunchtime. Some of the benefits are listed below:

- Meals are packed full of goodness, with at least two of your child's five-a-day.
- They help to develop your children's social skills and table manners.
- Evidence demonstrates that regular consumption of school dinners can improve educational attainment.
- They save you time! No shopping for sandwiches or preparing packed lunches.
- You get peace of mind knowing your child is getting a healthy nutritious cooked meal.

## Can I apply for free school meals?

You will qualify for free school meals if you receive:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit with an annual income of less than £16,190, provided you are not receiving Working Tax Credit
- the 'guaranteed' element of the State Pension Credit
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit with an annual net earned income threshold of less than £7,400
- support under part six of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Your child may be entitled to a free school meal because of a benefit that they receive in their own right.

## How do I apply?

### Apply for free school meals if you live in Barnsley

If you live in Barnsley and your child goes to school in Barnsley, Bradford, or Kirklees, fill in our application form below.

## **Apply for free school meals**

If you live in Barnsley, but your child goes to school in Rotherham, Doncaster, Sheffield, Leeds or Wakefield, you should apply to the council in the town where your child's school is situated.

### **Apply for free school meals if you live outside Barnsley**

If you live in Rotherham, Doncaster, Sheffield, Leeds or Wakefield, but your child goes to school in Barnsley, fill in our application form above for free school meals.

## **School meals are free for reception, year 1 and year 2 - why do I still need to apply for a free school meal?**

All children in reception, year 1 and year 2 get free school meals, but if you receive one of the benefits listed above you should still apply for a free school meal as you may also get help with:

- the cost of residential school trips (speak to your school about this).
- travel costs to school. See our [school travel page](#) for help with travel to school.
- music lessons at school. The lessons must be provided by [Barnsley Music Service](#) to qualify.
- free school milk.

Additionally, for each child registered for free school meals, schools will receive a pupil premium of £1,345 (primary schools) or £955 (secondary schools) per year. This is additional money for your child's school.

## **What happens next?**

We aim to make a decision within seven days of you applying.

We'll write to you to let you know our decision. We also let the school know that your child is entitled to a free school meal.

## **What changes do I need to tell you about?**

You must tell us straight away if:

- your child leaves school or moves to another address.
- your child moves school.

- you move to another address.

## **Why have I been automatically awarded a free school meal for my child?**

The government allows us to use information we already hold for Housing Benefit and Council Tax support claims to identify households who may meet the criteria for free school meals and automatically make an award of a free school meal.

If you don't want to have your information used for the automatic award then please [contact us online](#). Your information will not be checked for entitlement and will be taken off the lists we send to schools.

## **Why am I still entitled to a free school meal but my circumstances have changed?**

From April 2018 the criteria used to determine which pupils are eligible for free school meals was updated to reflect the introduction of Universal Credit and the phasing out of other income-based benefits.

To ensure families are not disadvantaged during the rollout, protection arrangements have been put in place. This protection will apply until your child either leaves primary school or secondary school.

If you would like more details on this please contact us on (01226) 787787 and pick option 3.