



Free School Meals

Is my child eligible for Free School Meals?

From December 2015 entitlement to Free School Meals will be processed as part of Housing Benefit/Council Tax Support claims by the Benefits Service. Free School Meals are a statutory benefit. Applying for a free school meal could raise up to an extra £1320 per annum for six years for your child's school (funded by central government). This can help to fund valuable teaching and learning support for your school (and is still paid to the school even if your entitlement ceases).

The Government does not allow us to recognise any other benefit other than those mentioned below. If you are not sure, please contact us.

Free school meals are available to children of families who are in receipt of:

- income Support
- income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- an income-related employment and support allowance
- support under part V1 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs) that does not exceed £16,190

Parents receiving Working Tax Credit for four weeks after their employment finishes are entitled to free school meals during that period. This also applies to parents who start working less than 16 hours per week (please seek advice about this from the Benefits Agency)

Children who receive Income Support or Income Based Job Seekers Allowance in their own right are also entitled to receive Free School Meals.

In cases where children receive education who have not attained compulsory school age, there will be a conditional requirement that they receive education both before and after the lunch period, before being eligible to receive Free School Meals.

Please note:

If you receive Working Tax Credit only, your child is NOT eligible.

How do I apply for free school meals?

Apply on-line at cms.walsall.gov.uk/free_school_meals

You can also apply by calling 0300 555 2855

Please be aware that the date of entitlement is the date a successful application is processed for Free School Meals: claims are not backdated.