



## How often do I need to apply?

You only need to apply for free school meals once, your eligibility will then be checked on a 4 weekly basis via the central benefit records database. If after this check of eligibility it is found that you are no longer eligible we will write to you requesting to see proof of the benefits you are receiving.

### The types of benefit proof accepted are:

- Recent documentary proof of being in receipt of Income Support (IS), Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (IBJSA) or Employment and Support Allowance – Income Based (ESA IR) from the Department for Work and Pensions
- For those in receipt of Child Tax Credit, most recent Tax Credit Award Notice – Form TC602 from the Inland Revenue
- Recent proof of receiving the Guarantee element of M1000 Pension Credit Award
- Recent proof of NASS letter or IS 96 (if claiming under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999)
- Proof of a Tax Credit Decision Notice (only to be sent if applying for Temporary authorisation).



## IMPORTANT

There is no legal requirement for the local authority to backdate entitlement or compensate families for the cost of school meals taken prior to the date an application for free school meals was made.

**It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify us of any changes to their benefit or circumstances during the school year which may affect their entitlement to claim free school meals.**

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**If you have further queries or wish to discuss your eligibility, please contact free school meals on 0116 305 6588 or 0116 305 7093.**

School Food Support Service  
Free School Meals  
Unit 14, The Courtyard  
Whitwick Business Park  
Stenson Road  
Coalville  
Leicestershire, LE67 4JP



# FREE School Meals

## Information for Parents and Guardians

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# Do I qualify to claim free school meals?



## The current criteria to qualify for free school meals are:

- A parent or guardian claiming Income Support (IS)
- A parent or guardian claiming Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- A parent or guardian claiming Employment and Support Allowance Income Based
- A parent or guardian claiming Child Tax Credit, provided the annual taxable income, as assessed by the Inland Revenue is not in excess of £16,190. Families who also receive an award of Working Tax Credit **do not** qualify to claim for free school meals
- A parent or guardian claiming The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- A parent or guardian claiming support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Children who receive Income Support (IS) or Income Based Jobseekers Allowance in their own right are also entitled to receive free school meals.



OR

## Temporary qualification for free school meals

From 1st May 2009 where a parent has been entitled to Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after their employment ceases, or after they start to work less than 16 hours per week, they will be eligible to claim free school meals over that period.

**Claimants MUST complete a hard copy application form and send it to us with a copy of their Tax Credit Decision Notice**, which will be issued immediately by HMRC to a claimant who has notified them that they have stopped working. Applications will not be accepted without this document and free school meals authorisation will not be granted prior to the date of application, or extended beyond the end date shown on the Tax Credit Decision Notice. In order to qualify for free school meals after that date the claimant will need to be in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits listed in the previous section, and evidence of this provided.

## No other benefits qualify for free school meals

## How do I apply?

- Email [freeschoolmeals@leics.gov.uk](mailto:freeschoolmeals@leics.gov.uk)
- Download the free school meals application form from [www.schoolfoodsupportservice.co.uk](http://www.schoolfoodsupportservice.co.uk)
- Request an application form on 0116 305 6588 or 0116 305 7093
- Apply via telephone on 0116 305 6588 or 0116 305 7093
- Fax 0116 305 5785
- Apply in writing to:  
School Food Support Service  
Unit 14, The Courtyard  
Whitwick Business Park  
Stenson Road  
Coalville  
Leicestershire LE67 4JP
- Applications are also available at the following Service Shops:
  - County Hall, Glenfield
  - Harborough District Council, Adam & Eve Street, Market Harborough
  - Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Argent's Mead, Hinckley
  - Civic Centre, Kingsway, Braunstone
  - Charnwood Borough Council, Southfields, Loughborough

