

Universal Infant Free School Meals – Free School Meals

What's the difference? Who gets a voucher? How Do I Apply?

Universal Infant Free School Meals were introduced by the government in 2014 to give all children, regardless of their economic background, a meal at school at lunchtime. It was a great idea to give all children a hot meal at school helping many families by saving them dinner money or money buying food to make packed lunches. It was for everyone – no application needed!

Free School Meals have been around for much longer than this. They were introduced many years ago to help low income families. Parents had to apply for this benefit and were eligible due to certain benefits they obtained. More recently, the government linked this means tested benefit, to providing additional money to support children in school called **Pupil Premium**. The school get additional pupil premium money into their budget based on the numbers of pupils eligible to free school meals.

This has led to some understandable confusion. **Only parents who have a means tested, registered entitlement to free school meals will get the £15 voucher.**

Q: I've lost my job – How do I know if I am entitled now?

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)
- Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals.

Your child may also get free school meals if you get any of these benefits and your child is both:

- younger than the [compulsory age for starting school](#)
- in full-time education

If your child is eligible for free school meals, they'll remain eligible until they finish the phase of schooling (primary or secondary) they're in on 31 March 2022.

If you think you may now be entitled to means tested free school meals for your children, you need to apply using this link:

<https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims-wirral>

Please contact your child's school if you need any assistance with this. To apply you need:

- Your own name and date of birth
- Contact details. Includes e-mail, phone numbers and address details. It is helpful to have an e-mail and correct postcode.
- National Insurance Number or National Asylum Seekers Number
- Child's name and date of birth
- School your child is attending/will attend.

To apply the steps are:

1. Click on the new application start option.

You will need to make a new application for each child but your information will be remembered to help you to complete multiple applications quickly.

You may apply for eligibility on behalf of a parent/carer if you have permission to do so and their details.

New application

Use this button if you are making a new claim for Free School Meals.

Previous application

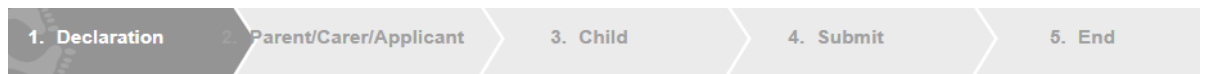
Use this button if you have a reference number and wish to continue with this (check eligibility status, un-apply, re-apply). You will need your application reference and your date of birth.

and

Application Reference

Date of birth (DD/MM/YYYY)

2. Carefully read the information on the screen. If you are ready to proceed, click on the Yes. Continue option.



Free school meals are available to pupils based on the following benefits:

- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

I agree that you will use the information provided to process my claim for free school meals and will contact other sources as allowed by law to verify my initial, and ongoing, entitlement.

I agree that the information may be used to ensure accuracy of records across the local authority and the check against fraud.

I agree that you can inform the school(s) attended by my child of their initial and ongoing entitlement to free school meals.

You may be aware of our [Privacy Policy](#).

To complete an application you will need to provide:

- Your own name and date of birth
- Contact details
- National Insurance Number or National Asylum Seekers Number
- Child's name and date of birth
- School your child is attending/will attend.

3. Add personal contact details. You will need your national insurance number (or National Asylum Seeker reference). It is helpful to have an e-mail address.



The system will cease to work if no response or activity is detected for a 40 minute period. If this happens anything you have not saved will be lost.

Name *

If you are making this application on behalf of a parent/carer, you must enter their details, not your own.

Title

Firstname

Lastname

Identification Number *

National Insurance Number

OR

National Asylum Support Service reference number

Personal information *

If you have legal parental responsibility for the child but your relationship isn't listed, please select 'Legal Parental Responsibility'.

Date of birth (DD/MM/YYYY)

Relationship to the child

Contact information

Email

Telephone (Landline)

Telephone (Mobile)

Yes, I would like email to be my primary communication channel for free school meal entitlement
Why use electronic communication ?

Please ensure that you try and avoid more than one parent trying to apply for a child.

4. Add your address. It is helpful to have the correct postcode.

Address information *

Enter a postcode

Addresses

Manual Address Data

Flat Number/Name **

House Number/Name **

Street Name *

Locality

Town/City *

Postcode

** One at least of Flat or House Number/Name is required.
* Required.

5. Add your child's details. Please make sure that they are correct because these will be checked against the school's records.

Easiest way you can find your child's school by using the name list option and searching the dropdown list.

When you are ready, click Save and Continue.

1. Declaration 2. Parent/Carer/Applicant 3. Child 4. Submit 5. End

The system will cease to work if no response or activity is detected for a 40 minute period. If this happens anything you have not saved will be lost.

Child's name *

Younger
Firstname Lastname

Child's details *

Date of birth (DD/MM/YYYY) Gender

School *

Sort by Name Distance to postcode CH41 5BR

IMPORTANT: You are giving permission for the above school (address St George's Road, Wallasey, Merseyside, CH45 3NF) to access the data you submit via this form.

Statement *

I confirm that I have parental responsibility for the child.
OR
 I confirm that I have completed this application on behalf of the parent/carers with his/her full knowledge or have the legal status to do so.
I confirm that the parent/carers for whom I have given details has parental responsibility for the child.

Remember that you can save and continue with your application at any point.

6. Finally, check all the details. When you are happy that they are correct, you should tick the statement confirming that to the best of your knowledge that the information is to the best of your knowledge correct and accurate.

Once this is done, you should then click on the SUBMIT option.

1. Declaration 2. Parent/Carer/Applicant 3. Child 4. Submit 5. End

The system will cease to work if no response or activity is detected for a 40 minute period. If this happens anything you have not saved will be lost.

Please carefully check all the details below before submitting - after you have submitted your application you will not be able to make any immediate changes. To make any changes after submission you will need to contact the school or local authority. If you need to change any details before submission use the BACK button at the bottom of this page.

Parent/Carer/Applicant	Mr Andrew Hall
Date of Birth	12/07/1972
National Insurance Number	JA371216B
Email	madeupemail@gmail.com
Telephone	01516390000
Mobile	07847263103
Address	BIRKENHEAD TOWN HALL HAMILTON SQUARE BIRKENHEAD CH41 5BR
Child in benefit	Younger Hall
Date of birth	14/07/2012
Gender	Female
Parent/Carer/Applicant's relationship	Father
School	St George's Primary School

Statement *

I confirm that the information I have given is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and accurate.

After you click the 'Submit' button your application will be saved and we will check your eligibility. This process may take a few seconds.

The data you provide may be transferred between schools in the Local Authority when your child moves from one school to another. If you do not wish this to take place please inform your child's current school.

Note that you **can add siblings** onto this application. This is done after you have submitted it. There is an option on the final page if your application is approved. You do not have to input all personal details again. **The system will not automatically add siblings to new applications.**

Q: I've been furloughed and my income has fallen – I might be entitled now?

Online application is the easiest way to apply. If you need assistance with your status you may need to contact the relevant benefits department (e.g universal credit, child tax benefit etc).

If you are not entitled now, once the school has the relevant details from you and enters it into the system, you will automatically be notified if you become entitled to means tested free school meals. In the meantime, there may be other sources of support available to you in the community. School and council may be able to support you with a manual check if the government's systems are not updated.

Your child's school wants to help you with this but can only allocate the vouchers according to the government criteria. You need to provide the information to help them check if you qualify.