

November 2023



Principal Nick Martin
BSc, MA, PGCE, NPQH

QUALIFYING BENEFITS TO RECEIVE FREE SCHOOL MEALS

The qualifying benefits to receive free school meals for children in Year 3 and over are:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit, and your annual gross income does not exceed £16,190 as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit (during the initial roll-out of this benefit)

Free School Meals stay with pupils for 6 years from any occasion of any of the above claims. This is known as FSM6.

How to apply for free school meals

If you think you meet the free school meals eligibility criteria, please call us on **0300 300 8306**. When you call to apply for free school meals, please have the following information ready:

- National Insurance numbers and dates of birth for you and your partner
- dates of birth for your children
- if you receive support from the National Asylum Support Service, your NASS number

Getting free school meals after making an application

As soon as we have confirmed that you qualify, we will tell your child's school that their free school meals can start from the date you apply.

Your child can then get a free school meal every day from the standard menu at the school's canteen or cafeteria.

Free school meals - telling us about changes in your circumstances

You are responsible for telling us any changes in your circumstances which might affect your child's free school meals, such as:

- you no longer wish to receive free school meals
- a new partner joins your household
- you move house
- your child changes their name
- you change your name
- another child reaches the qualifying age for free school meals
- your child goes into care
- your child changes schools

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- your child moves between parents and / or guardian

If you are in any doubt, please contact us on **0300 300 8306**. A failure to report a change in circumstances could result in free school meals being stopped.

If you need any further information, please contact the local authority:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/benefits/free-school-meals/apply.aspx>

You can also visit the free school meal website: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>



Robert Graves
Associate Principal

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