



Free School Meals

Dear Parents/Carers,

The Government is giving money to all schools to help students from lower income families do their very best. This funding is called the 'Pupil Premium'. We now receive this additional funding for each pupil on our roll registered as eligible for free school meals (FSM). This is currently £955 per student. We are using this money to help our students achieve the best possible grades in their GCSE examinations. Being eligible for FSM clearly has a benefit to the student-namely, a free high quality meal. This saves parents/carers over £400 per year. Another benefit to the student is help with the costs of school trips.

You may be eligible for free school meals if your son/daughter attends a state school, and you must be receiving one or more of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999
- Child Tax Credit, and your annual income is less than £16,190
- Guaranteed Pension Credit
- Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
- Working Tax Credit run-on
- Universal Credit, and your annual household income is £7,400 per annum (£616 per month) or less after tax, and not including any benefits.

If your son/daughter is currently receiving free school meals, and the above criteria no longer apply, your son/daughter's eligibility is protected, and they will continue to receive free school meals until the end of the Universal Credit Roll Out. The Government has currently scheduled no earlier than July 2023 for the protection period to end. This could be longer and will depend on your son/daughter's current year group.

We therefore strongly encourage eligible parents/carers to apply for this status. No one will know who has registered and it will not affect any other benefits being claimed.

Students can also register for Free School Meals if they get any of these benefits themselves.

I don't currently claim free school meals-what does this mean for me?

If you think you might be eligible for free school meals, you can apply via the Worcestershire County Council website. The system uses the same portal you used to apply for your son/daughter's school place. You should use your admission application login details on the Citizen Portal to apply for Free School Meals. If you do not currently have a Citizen Portal account, please follow the on-screen instructions to register an account. You can access the portal using this link:

https://emsi.worcestershire.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/en?ReturnURL=%2FCitizenPortal_LIVE%2F



Your eligibility for free school meals will be checked using the Government's automated ECS checker and the application is processed by the Free School Meal team. If you qualify for a free school meal under the benefit criteria, a message will be sent to you confirming your free school meal award and the school will be informed. Your son/daughter will receive free school meals and we will receive extra funding.

If you have any questions, please contact the Free School Meal team via freeschoolmeals@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk or 01905 845280.

Yours sincerely

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