

How can I apply for Free School Meals?

You can apply for free school meals by:

Completing an online application form which is available on the WCC website: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals.

Contacting the Customer Service Centre (01926 359189), who will take application details from you by telephone.

If we are unable to confirm your eligibility then you will need to provide us with documentary proof that you are in receipt of a qualifying benefit.

Who can I contact about Free School Meals?

For all enquiries about free school meals or assistance with your application please contact us:

By telephone: 01926 742543

By post or in person:

Free School Meals Office,
Communities, Saltisford Office Park,
Ansell Way, WARWICK, CV34 4UL

Office Hours: 8.30am - 5.00pm Monday to Thursday
8.30am - 4.30pm Friday

By e-mail: freemeals@warwickshire.gov.uk

Free School Meals

Information for Parents and Carers.

January 2019



Free School Meals

Free school meals are available to children who attend Warwickshire County Council maintained schools and maintained nursery schools on a full-time basis i.e. before and after the lunch period and whose parents/carers claim a qualifying benefit.

Who can claim Free School Meals?

- Families who receive:
- Income Support or Income-Based Job Seeker's Allowance.
 - Both income-based and contribution-based JSA/ESA if you receive the same amount for both. You should also qualify if you receive both but the income-based amount is greater, but not if the contribution-based amount is greater.
 - Child Tax Credit and have an annual taxable income, as assessed by HMRC, that does not exceed £16,190.
N.B. Families who also receive Working Tax Credit do not qualify to claim free school meals regardless of income.
 - Employment and Support Allowance (Income-Related).
 - Guarantee element of State Pension Credit.
 - Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
 - Universal Credit with an annual household income that does not exceed £7,400.

Working Tax Credit - Can I Claim?

If an applicant is entitled to Working Tax Credit as part of a 4-week run-on only, then they can begin their free school meals claim during that 4-week period. Please contact the Free School Meals department if this applies to you.

Universal Credit – Recent Changes

From 1st April 2018, a maximum income threshold was introduced for recipients of Universal Credit. Income now cannot exceed £7,400 per annum, or £616.67 per month to qualify for free school meals.

When applying, please send us a screenshot of your three most recent Universal Credit statements, including the associated 'Take Home Pay' sections. An officer will then use the screenshots to manually assess your eligibility, as the automatic system does not always recognise this particular benefit.

Transitional Protection

While the government is completing its roll-out of Universal Credit across the country, all children who are eligible for free school meals from 1st April 2018 to March 2022 will have protected status.

This means that they will continue to be eligible for free school meals either until March 2022, or for the duration of their current phase of education (whichever comes later).

This is regardless of changes to financial or home circumstances. Please note that transitional protection follows the child, not the family, so there may be situations where one sibling is protected and one is not.

IMPORTANT

There is no legal requirement for the local authority to provide a free school meal to a child, although the child may otherwise be eligible, where no application has been made.

The Local Authority cannot back-date free school meals claims as it is a benefit in kind and has no monetary value.