

School Meals

Cornwall Council encourages all children to have a healthy and nutritional meal at lunchtime, as well as a snack during morning break if that is wanted. It has been shown that children who have a nutritionally balanced meal, rather than one that has too much sugar and fat, are able to concentrate better on their lessons.

Infant Free School Meals

From 01 September 2014, all Key Stage 1 (Reception, Year 1 or Year 2) are entitled to receive a free school meal regardless of what benefits are claimed by their parent/carer.

If you are in receipt of benefits which would entitle your child to free school meals, your school may be entitled to receive funding (Pupil Premium) to support your child. Pupil Premium is additional funding that the Government gives to schools for each pupil where they are deemed to need further help. The money must be spent on that pupil to support their education, but it is for the school to determine how it is spent.

To see if you are entitled to Pupil Premium for your school, please check your eligibility below.

Are You Eligible?

There are currently 9,000 children in Cornwall in receipt of free school meals and in doing so are securing Pupil Premium funding for their school. However, we believe that there are many more that may be eligible.

Your child may be eligible for free school meals (and Pupil Premium for their school) if you are in receipt of any of the following benefits.

- Income Support (IS)
- Job Seekers' Allowance (Income-Based) and equal based Job Seekers Allowance.
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA-IR) and equal based Employment and Support Allowance.
- Child Tax Credit (CTC) with an Annual income of less than £16,190.
- Guarantee Element of Pension Credit (GPC)
- Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (IAA) Support
- Universal Credit

You are temporarily eligible to claim free school meals if you receive a Working Tax Credit run on - this is the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit. In order to qualify for free school meals after the four week period expires, you will need to be in receipt of one of the other qualifying benefits listed above.

Children who get any of the above benefits in their own right (i.e they get benefits payments directly, instead of through a parent or guardian) can also get free school meals.

Children under the compulsory school age who are in full time education may also be able to get free school meals.

What would make me ineligible? Please note that anyone claiming Working Tax Credit, Contribution-Based Job Seeker's Allowance and/or Contribution-Based Employment and Support Allowance is NOT eligible for free school meals or Pupil Premium, regardless of what other credit/benefits are being claimed.

If unsure, you can check your eligibility by completing ALL boxes below. The School Meals Team will be able to check your details against those held by HM Revenue and Customs, The Home Office and the Department of Work and Pensions, and will confirm via whether you are in receipt of the necessary

benefits.

I'm Eligible – How Do I Apply?

Once you have confirmed your eligibility, you can apply for free school meals (and Pupil Premium for your child's school) by completing the [Application for Free School Meals and Pupil Premium](#). Applications will be processed within 3 working days and you will be informed of the outcome in writing. Please also be aware that we are unable to backdate any claim.

If you are successful in your application, your child's eligibility to receive free school meals will continue until the end of their school life or until you cease to be eligible – whichever is first. There is no longer a need for claims to be renewed annually.

Your Continued Eligibility

The Council checks your entitlement to continue to receive free school meals (and Pupil Premium for your child's school) against data held by HM Revenue and Customs, The Home Office and the Department of Work and Pensions on a weekly basis. However, it is important that you inform us straight away if there are any changes to your personal circumstances, including any changes to your name, address or to the benefits you claim. Failure to notify the Council of such changes may amount to fraud, which is a criminal offence.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. I receive Child Tax Credit and my partner is entitled to Working Tax Credit. Am I still eligible?

A. Unfortunately there is no free school meals eligibility if either partner is entitled to Working Tax Credit, regardless of income.

Q. Can I appeal against the decision to refuse my application for free school meals and Pupil Premium?

A. The qualifying criteria for free school meals (and Pupil Premium for schools) is set by the Government. Any change to the criteria is a matter for central, not local government, so your Member of Parliament is the appropriate person to contact.

Q. Once I have applied and my claim has been accepted how soon will my child receive a free school meal?

A. We are committed to processing your application and advising the appropriate school about your child's entitlement as quickly as possible. Applications will be processed within 3 working days and you will be informed of the outcome in writing. Please also be aware that we are unable to backdate any claim.

Q. How will my child get his/her free school meal?

A. We will contact the school your child attends by when your application has been processed.

Q. As I qualify for free school meals (and Pupil Premium for my child's school) meals, can I also apply for help with the cost of my child's school uniform?

A. There is no requirement under the Education Act 2005 for local authorities to fund a uniform clothing allowance. As such, no assistance can be provided by Cornwall Council. However, we do advise you to raise this with your child's school.

Q. My child has is starting school and already has brothers and sisters who receive free school meals - do I need to re-apply?

A. All siblings should be added automatically before the start of the new academic year. However, please do not hesitate to contact the School Meals Team to check that this has happened.

The above information has been taken from the Cornwall Council website

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools-and-colleges/school-meals/>