

Free School Meals

Is your child's school missing out on funding?

More than 13,500 children in Suffolk already receive a free school meal and this saves their families around £437 a year. If your child is eligible for free meals now, then they will receive free school meals until March 2023 and then until the end of the phase of education that they are in at that time (ie either primary or secondary), regardless of any change to your circumstances.

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to a free school lunch every day, regardless of their family income, under the Universal Infant Free School Meals regulations. However, if you are receiving one of the benefits below, we urge you to apply for free school meals as you will continue to be eligible for the next four years due to the roll out of Universal Credits. It will also give your child's school extra funding to help your child learn. This funding is called Pupil Premium funding and, for a primary school, that amounts to £1,320 per child per year.

Schools decide how to spend this funding and may support your child in a variety of ways, such as by reducing fees for after school clubs and/or school trips or even extra staff in school. If you have any questions about this funding, please speak to your child's school.

Is your child eligible?

To register for a free school meal and help your school with extra funding, even if your child is entitled to a Universal Infant Free School Meal, you will need to receive any of the following benefits:

1. Income Support	5. Support under Part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999
2. Income based Jobseeker's Allowance	6. Guaranteed Element of Pension Credit
3. Universal Credit up to £7,400 of annual net earned income.	7. 28 Day Working Tax Credit run on
4. Child Tax Credit (<u>without Working Tax Credit</u>) & an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs) that does not exceed £16,190	8. Employment & Support Allowance (income related)

How do I apply?

It only takes a few minutes to apply online at www.suffolk.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals and you will know immediately whether your child is eligible. If you do not have access to a computer, tablet or mobile phone, you can visit your local library or your child's school should be able to assist you.

If you have no other means of applying, we can send you a paper application form by calling us on **0345 606 6067** but you will not find out if you are eligible immediately.

Once we've confirmed if your child is eligible, we will inform your child's school. If we cannot confirm your eligibility immediately online, it may be due to a change to your benefits or circumstances, so please contact us for assistance on **0345 606 6067** or by emailing freeschoolmeals@suffolk.gov.uk.

Don't let your child's school miss out – apply now!