

## **Free School Meals**

### **Eligibility**

If you are in receipt of Income Support, Income-Based Job Seeker's Allowance, Income related Employment Support Allowance or the Guarantee part of Pension Credit or if you have an annual income (as assessed by the HM Revenue and Customs) of less than £16,190 each year (but not Working Tax Credit) you will be eligible for Free School Meals.

Free School Meals could save you up to £380 per year for each child.

***By applying for Free School Meals you could also trigger additional resources for your children's school through the Pupil Premium. For every child registered, and entitled, the school gets £1320 to help children from lower income families.***

If you don't want your child to have the school meals they can continue as normal – as long as you qualify and are registered, the school will still receive the additional funding

### **How to apply**

If you are making a claim for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support then you don't need to make a separate claim for Free School Meals. You can request Free School Meals on the same form and we will assess your entitlement at the same time.

You can apply for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support from the Benefits homepage.

If you do not need to claim Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support and only want to claim Free School Meals then you should fill in an online claim form.

You should also make a claim online if you are already receiving Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support and one of your children starts full-time nursery or school maintained by the Local Authority.

### **Access the Free School Meals online claim form.**

<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/start/free-school-meals-application-form>

Once you have completed the online form and submitted it, it will be sent straight to the Free School Meals Team to be processed. You do not have to send in proof of your qualifying income as we will verify your claim with the Department for Work and Pensions.

### **Please note**

Schools cannot provide free meals to children until it has been authorised by the Council.