

2023/2024

Dear Parent/Guardian,

From September 2014, all infants in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 are entitled to Free School Meals regardless of the parent/guardian's circumstances. You may have heard this scheme referred to as Universal Infant Free School Meals.

However, if you think you might be eligible under the standard benefit criteria we strongly suggest that you make an application anyway.

The government gives schools additional funding called "Pupil Premium" for every pupil who successfully registers, so your application will benefit your child and their classmates.

If you meet the qualifying criteria as detailed below you can complete an online claim form by visiting our website www.luton.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals if you are unable to complete an online claim please speak to your school who will be able to provide a Pupil Premium Claim Form.

Free School Meals/Pupil Premium eligibility criteria:

- Income Support
- Universal Credit, and have a net annual income that does not exceed £7,400
- Job Seekers Allowance - Income Based
- Employment and Support Allowance - Income Related
- Support under part V1 of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit, provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income that does not exceed £16,190
- Guarantee element of Pension Credit.

Please note if you are in receipt of Working TAX Credit, you do not qualify for Free School Meals, even if your annual income is below £16,190.

How do I apply for Free School Meals and what is the process?

If your child is in education and meet the qualifying criteria as above you can complete an online claim form. We use an online eligibility checking system. We try to assess your claim within 5-10 working days. On your claim form please provide all current contact numbers and email as we may need to contact you for further information regarding your claim.

Please ensure you have the following details before making a claim:

- National Insurance Number
- Details of the school your child attends
- Parent/guardian and child's personal information
- List of received benefits

What is pupil premium?

The government will continue to provide schools with additional funding to support or enhance the learning of pupils who are currently or have been entitled to Free School Meals under the standard "benefit criteria" within the last 6 years. It is essential that parent/guardian's apply, even if the pupil does not wish to receive a free school meal. The additional funding received through the Pupil Premium grant can help fund valuable support including extra tuition, additional support staff or providing after school activities.

The Pupil Premium per pupil amounts for 2023/2024, which are:

Pupil	Per pupil rate
Primary	£1,385
Secondary	£985
Pupil Premium Plus: Looked after children (LAC) and those adopted from care or who leave care under a special guardianship order or child arrangements order (formerly known as a residence order)	£2,410
Service Children	£320

To claim the above please visit our website;

www.luton.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals

Yours sincerely

Educational Benefits Finance Officer

Luton