

# Claiming free school meals and how this helps your child in school

## FREE SCHOOL MEALS

If your child is entitled to a free school meal, the school also gets additional funding, called Pupil Premium, which is used by the school to offer further additional support to students. For example, providing extra teaching, targeted programmes or wider opportunities.

Thus, it really helps your child if you can claim for a free school meal if you are entitled to do so. The school will receive this additional funding even if your child does not take the meal,

If your child gets benefit-related free school meals, they can:

enjoy a lunch at school every day

take part in free activities and events during the school holidays\*

get supermarket vouchers during school holidays\*

**\* This is organised by Central Beds local authority, not the school.**

## Who can claim for free school meals:

Your child is eligible for free school meal and the school receives additional funding if you fall under any of the categories below:

- Universal Credit (if your annual net earned income is £7,400 or less, as assessed over up to three of your most recent assessment periods)

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (if you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and your annual gross income is £16,190 or less)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

## Transitional protection from income changes

From April 2018, the government introduced “transitional protection” for free school meals. This means that if you no longer meet the income criteria, your child can usually continue to receive free school meals until the rollout of Universal Credit is complete. The government has announced that transitional protection will continue until September 2026.

## How to claim for a free school meal

If your child is eligible, the Local Authority should contact you based on data they hold about your child. This is automatic and you don't need to do anything. The school will then be informed and receive funding.

If you feel you have been missed out or your circumstances have changed, then contact the local authority with details below.

**[Contact the Local Authority](#) if you have questions or feel your child is eligible and you have not yet been contacted. Details below:**

Call 0300 300 8000 or email

**[revsandbensfm@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:revsandbensfm@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)**

If at any point you want help with any of this process, email at school [nikki.brennan@redborne.com](mailto:nikki.brennan@redborne.com) and we can assist you.

Updated August 2025 Nikki Brennan