

Free School Meals at School

Who can use it?

Parents and carers who receive any of the following are entitled to free school meals:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support (IS)
- Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related) - not Contribution related
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance (IBJSA) - not Contribution based
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit.
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit with an annual taxable income (as assessed by HMRC) of less than £16,190 as long as the family are not also in receipt of Working Tax Credit.

If you have recently become unemployed, but are still receiving Working Tax Credits, you may be entitled to free school meals. Please phone us on 0300 123 2224 for advice.

Only the benefits listed above qualify for free school meals. No other benefit entitles the parent or carer to free school meals for their children.

How do I apply?

1. Please complete the online form, print out a copy of the form from this page or contact us on 0300 123 2224 to ask for an application form.
2. If you are filling in a paper form, take the completed paper form to your child's school, or send it to: Entitlements Team, County Hall, Taunton, TA1 4DY.

You do not need to send evidence with this application. If we need evidence at a later date we will contact you.

Important

You no longer need to reapply for the same children as long as you remain entitled. Once we have your details on record we will do regular checks to see whether you are still entitled. To perform these checks we need up to date details. Therefore, you must let us know of any changes of benefit, name or address of the person in your household receiving the qualifying benefit. Incorrect details may lead us to believe that you are no longer entitled to free school meals. You can either tell us by writing to the Entitlements Team, County Hall, Taunton, TA1 4DY, phoning the helpline number 0300 123 2224, or by emailing reeschoolmeals@somerset.gov.uk. You will need to submit a new application for any children you haven't previously applied for.

What happens next?

We will enter your details onto an online system which will tell us whether you are entitled or not. We will tell you of the outcome, usually within 5 to 10 working days of getting the application. If you are eligible, we will tell you how to start receiving free school meals.

What is covered?

If your child is entitled to a free school meal, but requires a special medical diet we can arrange for an appropriate meal to be provided. You will need to ask your doctor to write a letter explaining which foods must be avoided.

Please contact us for further advice.

Universal Infant Free School Meals

Every child in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 is entitled to a Universal Infant Free School Meal. Each school is responsible for providing this and they may ask you to complete an application form to show that you require a meal for your child or children. Therefore, please contact your school to discuss arranging a meal.

Contacts

Contact: Children and Young People's Team

Address: Customer Contact, PO Box 618, Taunton, Somerset TA1 3WF

Email: childrens@somerset.gov.uk

Contact no: 0300 123 2224

Fax: 01823 321187

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm, Saturday 9am to 4pm, closed Sunday.

Application Form for Free School Meals at School

Important: All sections must be filled in clearly in **BLOCK CAPITALS** and must be completed by the person claiming the qualifying benefit. If you have any questions, phone the helpline on 0300 123 2224.

1. Details about you

Legal Surname	Legal Forename	Title	Date of Birth	National Insurance Number or National Asylum Support Number							

2. Your address:

Address: _____

Post Code _____ Relationship to child(ren): _____

Telephone Number(s): Daytime _____ Mobile _____

Child(ren)'s Address: _____ Post Code _____
(if different)

3. Details of each dependant child that you wish to claim for in Somerset (include all children):

Legal Surname	Legal Forename	M/F	Date of Birth	Name of School Attending (if School Age)	Office Use only

Please note: Any award of Working Tax Credit (other than the 4 week 'run on') automatically disqualifies entitlement to free school meals. The Government does not allow us to recognise any benefit other than those listed on the Somerset County Council website/application form.

Where did you find out about Free School Meals?

--

4. Declaration: I confirm that the information I have given above is correct. I will tell you immediately if my details (for example address) or my circumstances change.

I wish for Somerset County Council to be able to assess my claim now and in the future via a secure computer link with the Department for Education. I agree that Somerset County Council can use the information I have provided to process my claim for free meals and can contact other sources as allowed by law to verify my initial and continuing entitlement. The information requested will be held securely and will only be disclosed to staff in the Local Authority or partner agencies who have a right of access, as well as, where appropriate, to the Department of Education, Ofsted and Capita Children's Services. If a disclosure elsewhere becomes necessary, we will contact you before doing this. When no longer required, it will be disposed of in a manner appropriate to its sensitivity.

Your signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return this form to: Entitlements Team, County Hall, Taunton, TA1 4DY

Office Use Only

ECS	Core Data	EMS	Letter sent
Y/N			