

Who do I contact if I have a query?

As details and information to do with your claim are confidential and held only at your child / children's school, any queries linked to your claim have to be dealt with at that school.



What happens to the information I give?

All information is treated in the strictest confidence and is only held by Aberdeenshire Council.



Schools Clothing Grant

A Schools Clothing Grant may also be available to parents / guardians who meet with criteria laid down by Aberdeenshire Council. Application Forms and Information Leaflets are available from your child / children's school.



If you have any difficulty in reading this leaflet please contact your child / children's school



HUNGRY FOR SUCCESS

Whole School Approach to School Meals in Scotland

This is a Scottish Executive initiative to improve the Scottish diet starting at an early age. In schools Teaching staff and Catering staff are working together to:

- Provide information in the classroom on a balanced diet
- Serve a lunch that puts this into practice.
- Serve a lunch that is both popular with children and is nutritionally balanced.

Aberdeenshire Council encourages all pupils who qualify, to apply for free school meals and to always take a meal.

In Secondary Schools there is a programme to introduce Smart Card technology. Pupils will receive a free meal and their accounts are credited daily with the value of a two course meal.

A card system is currently in use at Meldrum Academy and will soon be introduced to Peterhead and Portlethen Academies.



A guide on how to obtain Free School Meals.

What are Free School Meals?

A Free School Meal is a school lunch provided free of charge by Aberdeenshire Council to children whose families meet the required criteria.

In a **Primary School**: The child/children receive the same dinner ticket as a paying pupil, this is then handed over at lunchtime giving the same choice from the daily menu.

In a **Secondary School**: The child / children receive a daily credit allowance in the schools cafeteria to be used at lunchtime, equivalent to the value of a two-course meal on items chosen off the menu. Further details are available from your child / children's school.

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### Is my child entitled to a free school meal?

Free school meals are linked to the level of benefit / income a family receives and will be provided if:-

- A. If a family is in receipt of Income Support.
- B. If a family is in receipt of Income Based Job Seekers Allowance.
- C. If the parents in a family are students who receive Child Tax Credit but not Income Support.
- D. If parents / carers on a low income but receive Child Tax Credit. (The income threshold is currently £16,040 for 2009/2010)
- E. If a family received Child Tax Credit but **NOT** Working Tax Credit and is within the current income threshold.

F. If parents receive help under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Families in receipt of both Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit are **NOT** eligible for Free School Meals even if their income is below the current income threshold.

These figures are subject to change from the Inland Revenue but are correct at the time of printing.

It is your right to make an application if you meet any of the criteria.

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Where can I obtain an application form from?

Application forms are only available from your child / children's school.

A separate form must be completed and submitted to each school if children in the same family attend different schools.

'Alternatively, if you apply for Housing / Council Tax Benefit, the application form will also be used as a claim for free school meals - you will not be required to complete a separate form at the school. If your child is entitled to free school meals, the benefits section will send you a letter confirming this. You can take this letter to the school to claim your free school meals.'

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### Do I have to provide any additional information along with my application form?

Proof of income **must be produced** at you child / children's school along with the completed application form.

This can either be: -

- Your Benefit book,
- TC602 Credit Award Notice – available from the Inland Revenue.
- Proof of Entitlement to Benefit letter sent to you by Job Centre Plus.
- Job Centre Plus authorisation stamp on your application form if you are in receipt of Income Support or Income-Based Job Seekers Allowance.

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Who do I return the application form to?

Application forms must be returned to your child / children's school unless you are applying using the Housing / Council Tax Benefit Form which should be returned to you local benefit office.

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### What happens if my circumstances change?

If your circumstances change for any reason you must advise the school immediately.

If you receive a Free School Meal, which you are not entitled to, you will be asked to pay back that money.

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