

Who Qualifies?

Parents living in England and Wales do not have to pay for their children's school lunches if they receive any of the following:

- ◆ **Income Support**
- ◆ **Income based Jobseeker's Allowance (not contributed based JSA)**
- ◆ **Income related Employment Support Allowance**
- ◆ **Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999**
- ◆ **The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit**
- **Child Tax Credit - as long as you have a yearly household income of less than £16,190 (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) and do not get Working Tax Credit**
- ◆ **Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)**
- ◆ **Universal Credit with no earned income or with net monthly earnings less than £616.67**

Parents who receive Working Tax Credit are **not** entitled to claim Free School Meals for their children. However, if you have recently become unemployed or have reduced your working hours and have been granted the 4 week working tax credits run on, then you may be entitled to free school meals.

Application Process

You are able to apply for Free School Meals online (via the Cheshire East website) or by phone. If you are not sure whether your child will be entitled to Free School Meals, you only need have your National Insurance number to hand – the process is simple and successful claims can usually begin the same day.*

Cheshire East Council use the Government eligibility checker to confirm your entitlement and will automatically review this on a regular basis.

You must remember to inform Cheshire East Council of any changes to your income or household, including if your child changes or leaves school or you change your address.

In addition, if your child moves to a school in another local authority, your entitlement will not automatically transfer. You will need to resubmit an application for Free School Meals to the local authority in which your child attends school.

**It is important you let us know that your child has become entitled to Free School Meals. Although Cheshire East Council will add your child's name to an entitlement list available via a secure electronic portal, they do not automatically inform us once they have made any changes. Letting us know means that we can verify the entitlement and update our records without delay. Please note, however, that the cashless catering system cannot be updated at break and lunchtimes.*



The poster features a blue and yellow logo at the top left. The main title is 'Free School Meals Information' in bold black text. Below the title are several logos: 'Free School Meals MATTER' in a green apple shape, 'Free School Meals Are you entitled?' in a pink square with a fork and knife, and 'Make School Meals Count' in a blue and orange banner. At the bottom, it says '2017/18' in large black text. The background of the poster shows four children sitting at a table eating.



At this stage it is really important that both the school and parents encourage and support students to eat their Free School Meal.

There are numerous combinations of food available from our school canteen, Mtakula (*Swahili for 'we will all eat'*). Students can choose from a hot main meal, pasta, jacket potatoes, salads and fruit or a dessert. There are no restrictions as to whether the allowance is spent at break or lunchtime or on the type of food a student is able to purchase.

Use of the cashless catering system in school enables your daughter to remain anonymous with the entitlement being added to the system each day. Any unspent allowance does not accrue the following day, so it is important that pupils are encouraged to take up the entitlement daily.

Your daughter will also be entitled to a packed lunch in the event that she participates in any offsite activities or day trips and this should be requested in advance via the member of staff responsible for organising the trip.



Pupil Premium

Pupil Premium is additional funding provided by the Government to assist schools in raising the attainment and progress of students who are in full time education up to and including Year 11.

The Government believes that Pupil Premium funding, which is in addition to the main school funding, is the best way to address current inequalities by ensuring that extra funding reaches those students who need it most.

Schools are able to claim Pupil Premium funding for students who have been registered for **Free School Meals** at any point during the last six years (subject to conditions), further reinforcing the need to make sure every child that qualifies is actually registered.

How to Apply

Online:

www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/free_school_meals

Telephone:

0300 123 5012

(For an immediate decision make sure you have your National Insurance number to hand)

Contact details:

Free School Meals
Cheshire East Council
PO Box 622
Crewe CW1 9JH

Email: freeschoolmeals@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Alternatively, at Sandbach High School and College, Miss C Smith is responsible for recording a student's entitlement to Free School Meals and can provide guidance regarding the application process if required. You are welcome to call into school where we can assist you with telephoning or applying to Cheshire East online.

Tel: 01270 765031

Sandbach High School and College,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach, Cheshire CW11 3NT

e-mail: csmith@sandhigh.cheshire.sch.uk