

Free school meals

If your child was receiving a free school meal during the last school year there is no need to renew your application.

Register for free school meals to help out your school

If your child is eligible for free school meals, it's worth registering them even if they're not going to have the school lunch. This is because schools receive a 'pupil premium' - an extra payment for each eligible child which they can spend on useful services. Registering might also get you extra help for things like music lessons or school trips.

Free school meals are for children who:

- live in the city of Salford (the area covered by Salford City Council); **and**
- go to school (not a day nursery or children's centre) in Greater Manchester (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, **Salford**, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford or Wigan)

If you live outside the city of Salford, but your child goes to a Salford school, complete the online form as directed on Salford's website. www.salford.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/free-school-meals

Free meals are not usually available for children who go to independent (private) schools.

Who is entitled to free school meals:

- registered pupils at primary and secondary free schools, academies and local authority maintained schools (including a sixth form centre attached to a maintained school); and
- pupils attending maintained nurseries, as long as they are receiving education before and after lunch.

From September 2014 parents of children who are 16 and over, who are attending a further education college or a sixth form centre (not attached to a school), can apply to their child's college for free meals if they get a qualifying income listed below.

Who qualifies?

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related employment and support allowance
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Universal credit (**not working**)
- Universal credit (**working and net earnings are less than £7,400 per year**)
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are **not** also entitled to **Working Tax Credit** and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Where a parent is entitled to Working Tax Credit Run-on, paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

- If you get support under **part VI** of the **Immigration and Asylum Act 1999**

* Please note: To be entitled to claim free school meals (FSM) when working and claiming Universal Credit, the earnings for one period should be no more than £616.67, earnings for the last two periods should be no more than £1,233.34, and the earnings for the last three periods should be no more than £1,850.00. Therefore if your earnings for one, two or three periods are below the upper earnings limits stated, you would be entitled to claim FSM. You will need to upload screen shots of each page of the relevant payment statement(s), especially the page(s) showing any deductions that are being made, with your online application, so we can then determine if you are entitled to claim free school meals. However, if your earnings for one period exceed £616.67, or if your earnings for two periods exceed £1,233.34, or if your earnings for three periods exceed £1,850.00, then you would not qualify to claim FSM

Children who receive any of the above benefits in their own right (ie they get payments directly, instead of through a parent or guardian) can also get free school meals.

However, as soon as you stop claiming any of the qualifying benefits listed above, your entitlement to claim free school meals also ends.

Apply in the following ways:

Apply online at:

salford.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/free-school-meals

There now have two online application forms available for **parents**:

If you are claiming any of the qualifying benefits listed above, please use the:

[Income based free school meals application](#)

Or if you are an asylum seeker use the:

[Asylum seekers free school meals application](#)

Apply by telephone

If you are claiming housing and/or council tax benefit which is assessed using one of the qualifying incomes above, for example Income Support or Jobseekers Allowance then we should be able to process your free school meal applications and renewals over the phone, so please call them on **0161 793 2500** to apply.

However, if we are unable to process your application when you call, usually because there is no current housing and/or council tax benefit claim in payment, you will need to apply in person

How to apply in person

If we are unable to confirm your entitlement when you ring, you can attend drop in sessions which are available at [Unity House](#), Civic Centre, Swinton, from 8.30am to 4.30pm daily, except Wednesday when we open at 10.00am.

You can also apply for free school meals at any of our Gateway centres

- [Eccles Gateway](#), 28 Barton Road, Eccles
- [Pendleton Gateway](#), 1 Broadwalk, Salford
- [Walkden Gateway](#), 2 Smith Street, Walkden
- [Swinton Gateway](#), Chorley Road, Swinton

Staff at the Gateway Centres should be able to process your free school meals application on a drop in basis. However, if you would like to see an advisor in a private interview room, you will need to make an appointment by either visiting your nearest centre or by calling them on 0161 793 2500.

Documents you will need to produce

If you are applying in person, please be sure to bring documentary proof that you are currently in receipt of any of the above qualifying benefits, or confirmation that you receive support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (eg IND letter or a NASS letter).

We will be unable to process your application for free school meals unless we have seen the necessary proof that you are entitled to claim.

Need more information?

[If you think your child may be entitled to free school meals](#)^[2] you can obtain further information from the Department for Education, by calling Salford City Council 0161 793 2500.

Even if your child is entitled to Government related Universal Free School meals for pupils in Reception to Y2 please remember, it is of benefit to yourself and your child's school to claim your benefit related free school meals.

Pupil Premium

The pupil premium gives schools extra funding to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils from reception to year 11.

The Government introduced a fund of £625 million in April 2011 to give schools £400 per year for children who:

- were registered as eligible for free school meals
- had been looked after for 6 months or longer

From April 2012, we extended pupil premium funding to children eligible for free school meals at any point in the past 6 years.

The current Free School Meal Funding for eligible pupils is:

- **£1,455 per pupil of primary-school age**
- £1035 per pupil of secondary-school age
- £2,530 per pupil who:

Have previously been looked after by the Local Authority or other state care
Children who are looked after by the Local Authority

School accountability for the pupil premium

The pupil premium is paid to schools as they are best placed to assess what additional provision their pupils need.

Ofsted inspections report on how schools' use of the funding affects the attainment of their disadvantaged pupils.