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## Free School Meals

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### Eligibility

Free school meals are available only to children whose parents/guardians are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Families in receipt of Child Tax Credit provided they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit, and have an annual gross income, of no more than £16190 as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.  
(Parents who are made redundant or start working less than 16 hours per week, may find their children are entitled to free meals for a limited period.)
- Working Tax Credit run-on-paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- All Universal Credit claimants are currently eligible for education benefits
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

**No other benefits qualify for free school meals.**

### Apply for free school meals

#### New Online Free School Meal Eligibility Checking

Hampshire County Council Catering Services (HC3S) has launched a new online service so parents can check their eligibility for free school meals themselves.

This self-service option is available at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/hc3s/freeschoolmeals.htm>

Please note that the criteria for free school meals is the same, regardless of method of checking eligibility, but for the online service, all you need to do is enter your name, national insurance number or asylum number, your address and your child's details. Press 'submit' and you will find out if you are eligible.

If your result comes back 'found', this means your child is eligible for free school meals and the system automatically tells your school.

No more hassle in digging out paperwork and going into school to get it checked.

For more information, check out the web address above, or phone Sue Martin on 023 8062 7738.