

## **Free School Meal Applications - Important Notes.**

### **NEW APPLICANTS.**

If you are applying for the first time you will need to provide a copy of your child's birth certificate or a recent child benefit letter that confirms your child's name and date of birth.

We will check your entitlement for Free School Meals (FSM) through the electronic FSM Eligibility Checking Service (ECS), where data is held by the Department of Work and Pensions, the Home Office and HMRC (Revenue and Customs). If the ECS is unable to confirm that you are entitled to free school meals, we will ask you to provide paper evidence, to complete your application.

If you are making a new application, your child's school can provide emergency meals for up to 4 weeks from the date you give them a completed application form along with proof that you receive benefits. The school will add a note to the application form to confirm the date the emergency meals started and pass it on to us for processing.

### **RENEWING APPLICANTS.**

If you completed an application form last year and we checked your eligibility for FSM on the ECS you will not need to complete another application form. We are now checking the ECS to see if pupils are still eligible about 4 weeks before their authorisations expire.

If we cannot verify your entitlement electronically, we will contact you by letter to ask for evidence to show that you are in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits.

### **RETURN OF APPLICATION FORMS OR PAPER EVIDENCE.**

Once you have completed the application form (and have photocopies of any documents we require) and the school has stamped it you can:

- Let the school pass the application form to us, or
- Send it to Westminster City Council, FSM, PO Box 5744, Dingwall, IV15 9XB.

### **IMPORTANT F9A-B89F "**

- Applications for FSM are authorised for one year and cannot be backdated.
- If at any stage your child/children change School then you must inform the Authority by ringing us on the following number 020 7641 3412. Also if you move address you must tell us by phoning us.