

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 long birth certificate or a recent child benefit letter that confirms your child's date of birth and that you are the parent/guardian responsible for the child named on the application form. (You can call the Child Benefit Helpline on 0845 302 1444 to request an entitlement letter that confirms your child's date of birth).

You do not need to provide proof of your benefits, except if you receive Child Tax Credit and we will need a copy of pages 1-4 of your current Tax Credit Award Notice (TC602).

We will check your entitlement for Free School Meals (FSM) on the Department for Children, Schools and Families, 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 (previously called the Hub) is unable to confirm that you are entitled to free school meals, we will ask you to provide evidence.

RENEWING APPLICANTS.

If you completed a blue 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 6 weeks before their authorisations expire.

If you completed an old style application form last year which did not request parent/guardian national insurance number and date of birth you will need to complete a blue application form.

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,
- Hand it in at a Westminster One Stop Service Centre (Victoria Street, Church Street, Harrow Road) or
- Send it to Westminster City Council, FSM, PO Box 5744, Dingwall, IV15 9XB.

Applications for FSM are authorised for one year and cannot be backdated.

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.

IMPORTANT REMINDER.

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.