

FREE SCHOOL MEALS and PUPIL PREMIUM

Your School Needs You! If you are entitled to claim for Free School Meals, please apply so we can access more funding for our school, and help more children to learn and achieve, experience and enjoy, grow and develop.

My child is eligible for Free School Meals but I don't want to take up the offer – why am I being encouraged to apply?

For every child that is entitled to Free School Meals the school receives **extra funding** to enhance provision and improve progress and outcomes for children. This is called the Pupil Premium Grant, the school can use this in any way they choose but many use it to provide free milk, reduced cost trips or help with uniforms etc. Your child can still bring a packed lunch if they prefer but by applying through Cumbria's portal you ensure their school receives this additional grant.

Universal Free School Meals

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to a free lunch every day at school. You don't have to qualify or apply for this. If your child is in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 and you do **qualify** for Free School Meals but don't apply for this entitlement, the school will not receive the additional funding that comes when you make a Free School Meal application. Once your child is eligible for Free School Meals, there is no need to reapply each year; they will automatically remain eligible until they have finished their current phase of schooling (e.g. Primary). You only have to apply once; the earlier you apply, the earlier the school will have access to the additional grant. You will also be eligible for any Free School Meal vouchers issued in school holidays [subject to government funding].

In addition, many children in all year groups are eligible for 'Free School Meals', either because parents are entitled to certain benefits or because household income falls below a certain level. If you eligible and apply for Free School Meals, you will also be entitled to preferential booking for the council's 'Holiday Activity and Food' programme with free activities and food provided for 5-16 year olds.

More information on applying can be found on the following link:

<https://cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices/schoolsandlearning/freeschoolmeals.asp>

If you think your child is eligible for Free School Meals, the online application process is quick and simple:

- where possible all parents and guardians should apply online - you will receive an immediate response advising you whether you are eligible or not
- if you are unable to apply online please contact the free school meals team - telephone: 01228 606060

When a child is eligible for Free School Meals, the school receives additional funding known as 'Pupil Premium'

Pupil Premium Grant

The pupil premium is **additional** government funding for pupils who are eligible and have applied for Free School Meals (FSM) or at any time in the previous six years, as well as Children Looked After (CLA), adopted children (Ad) and for service families. The funding goes direct to your child's school, and makes a real difference to the opportunities and support available.