

Free School Meals and 'Pupil Premium'.

The Government is giving money to schools to help children from lower income families to do their best. This funding is called "Pupil Premium". From April 2014, schools receive £1,320 for each pupil who qualifies. In order to access this funding your child will need to be registered for Free School Meals (FSM's). It is important to sign up for free school meals as such funding can be spent on valuable support like extra tuition, learning assistants or after school clubs. Even if you don't want your child to receive a free meal, we would encourage you to register for free school meals so our school receives as much funding as possible.

Changes From September 1st 2014 Universal Free Schools Meals (UFSM) for all Reception and KS1 pupils

Although all pupils in these age groups will be receiving a free school meal under the Government's new initiative it is important as a parent /carer of pupils in these year groups to still apply for FSM's by submitting your claim as usual in order for the school to receive the **very important and essential Pupil Premium funding** from the Government.

Your child will receive a free meal regardless of completing a form. However, for the school to access this Government Pupil Premium funding, the application form for Free School Meals must be completed and submitted.

Do you qualify for Free School Meals?

You can register your child for Free School Meals if you receive one of these benefits:-

- Income Support.
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance.
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance.
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- The Guarantee element of the State Pension Credit.
- Child Tax Credit, provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) that does not exceed £16,190.
- Working Tax Credit run-on – the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.

How can I get an application form?

Please contact Mrs Bruce in the school office in confidence for an application form and further details. Alternatively you can contact Southend Borough Council, Children's Services Department on 01702 201007. You can apply for free school meals by using Southend Borough Council's online form:

http://www.southend.gov.uk/info/200343/help_with_costs/56/free_school_meals .

The person who qualifies for the free school meals should fill in the form. The council will email you within two working days to confirm whether or not you are eligible. You can also apply by downloading the application form from the Council's website.

Once you have filled in the application form you should return it to the school office together with evidence of the benefit entitlement.

How the information you provide will be used.

The information you provide will be used by the Council to claim extra grant money from the government to pay for free school meals, sports funding and other things, like music and after school activities. This information helps to decide how much money your child's school will receive each year too.