

## Frequently asked questions

### If I am entitled to claim free school meals, what does this mean?

You are able to claim a free school meal for your child, from the standard menu at the canteen or cafeteria at his or her school.

### How do I apply?

Call **0300 300 8306**. When you call us please have the following information ready: national insurance numbers and dates of birth for you and your partner, dates of birth for your children, and if you receive support from the National Asylum Support Service, your NASS number.

### Who qualifies for free school meals?

You may qualify if your child attends a school full time in the Central Bedfordshire area, and you get any of the following: Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit, Support from the National Asylum Support Service, Child Tax Credit (**but not Working Tax Credit**) and you have an annual income that does not exceed £16,190.

### I do not live in Central Bedfordshire, but my child goes to a school in the Central Bedfordshire area. Which council do I apply to?

If your child is attending a Central Bedfordshire school full time, then you should apply to Central Bedfordshire Council by calling **0300 300 8306**.

### Who should apply, me or my partner?

Either of you can apply, but you must have the National Insurance number, date of birth and full name of the person who receives the qualifying benefit ready.

### Do I need to send in proof of my income?

No. You can normally complete your application just by calling **0300 300 8306**. Once you have applied we will check your benefit entitlement with the details held by the council's Customer Accounts office, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Home Office and HM Revenue and Customs.

### How will I know if I qualify for free school meals?

We will tell you when you telephone us. If there are any problems verifying your entitlement we will discuss these with you during your call.

### Do I have to reapply each year?

No. But please tell us if your circumstances change.

## Find out more

If you would like more information about free school meals, please contact us

on the web: [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

on the telephone: **0300 300 8306**

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# Free school meals?

**DON'T MISS OUT!**



Why pay for school meals when your child can get them for **free**? If you receive benefits your child could be tucking into a **free tasty meal** everyday – that's a saving of at least £300 per year.

**Don't delay, apply today!**

Central Bedfordshire Council  
[www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

Central Bedfordshire

Are you responsible for children or are you 16-18 years old and receiving benefit or tax credit in your own right?

No?

You can't get free school meals.

No?

Yes?

Do you get **any** of the following benefits?

Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-based Employment and Support Allowance, Child Tax Credit and you are not receiving Working Tax Credit and with an HMRC-assessed household annual income less than £16,190, Guaranteed Pension Credit, Support from the National Asylum Support Service.

No?

Have you just stopped working or have your hours been cut to below 16 hours a week **and are you getting Working Tax Credit run on for four weeks?**

Yes?

Yes?



You can get free school meal entitlement **for these four weeks only.**

You can get **free school meals**, call us on 0300 300 8306.



**DON'T MISS OUT!**

Around 3643 pupils in Central Bedfordshire currently get free school meals. We think there are lots more who could qualify. We would like to help families whose children could get free school meals to apply for them.

### Why apply?

- school dinners provide a healthy, nutritious and tasty meal
- research shows a school dinner can help concentration levels
- even if you do not have the meal, it will help your school
- you will be helping your school – for every child that registers for a free school meal the school will receive extra finance from the Government.



**So what are you waiting for?**  
**Apply today - it's easy to do!**  
**Ring us on 0300 300 8306.**