



Universal credit

The old eligibility rules were ended on 31st March 2018 and a four year roll-out for free school meal checks has been implemented until 31st March 2022 for the change-over to universal credit.

If you are eligible as of 31st March 2018 or become eligible **at any time** between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2022 your child will be protected, regardless of your change in circumstances, until the end of the phase of education they are in as of 31st March 2022 (the table on the next page provides further information)

Who is eligible?

If you have a child who starts school after 1st April 2018 and you already have a child who is protected, you will still need to send an application to request an eligibility check as the family is not covered.

Notes

A request for free school meals must be made in order for a child to become eligible. The cost of school meals cannot be claimed for any period prior to a claim for free school meals being made.

Your entitlement commences on the date when an application is made to the school. Claims to be reimbursed for any school meals previously paid for during your period of benefit entitlement will not normally be met.

Children in early years or reception classes who are below compulsory school age must be attending both before and after the lunch period, in order to be eligible to receive free school meals. Free school meal eligibility will be re-checked when a child enters reception as EYPP will stop and pupil premium is not automatically entitled.

Children in the care of the Local Authority, e.g. foster children, or of a voluntary organisation, cannot be considered for free school meals.

How to make a claim:

Please complete an application form (making sure the NI number is clear and readable) and give it to your school office.

Eligibility and transitional protection

The following table shows at the end of which phase of education your child's protection will end if you become entitled during the transition period.

For example

- If you become eligible during 2019/2020 and your child is in year 3 they will be protected until July 2023
- If you become eligible during 2018/2019 and your child is in year 5 they will be protected until July 2025
- If you are confirmed eligible from 31st March to 24th July 2018 and your child is in year 8 or above they will be protected until the end of further education and so will not require a re-check.

Academic year beginning	Sep-17	Sep-18	Sep-19	Sep-20	Sep-21	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24	Sep-25	Sep-26	Sep-27
Primary				Rec	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	
			Rec	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6		
	Rec	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6				
	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6					
Secondary	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6						
	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11		
	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11			
	Yr 5	Yr 6	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11				
Re-check not required	Yr 6	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11					
	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11						
	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11	Yr 12	Yr 13	Yr 14				
	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11	Yr 12	Yr 13	Yr 14					

If you are ineligible

Please **do not** contact the council directly if you have a query because they will not be able to help you.

If the school informs you that you are ineligible please contact HMRC and DWP to confirm your current financial circumstances and make sure you have provided the school with your correct details.

Data protection

Information contained on the application form is personal data and will be held in a computer securely. The information held is subject to the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR.