



sustain
the alliance for better food and farming



FREE SCHOOL MEALS IN ENGLAND

Make sure you're not missing out!

Many families are entitled to free school meals but are not claiming this support. Free school meals support in the form of supermarket vouchers or food parcels will be provided over the summer holidays for all children who are registered for free school meals. Apply as soon as possible to your school or local authority so that you don't miss out.

This information sheet will explain if you might be eligible for free school meals and how to apply. It includes information for families that receive welfare support and for families with **no recourse to public funds (NRPF)**.

The families of children that were getting universal infant free school meals because they were in reception, year 1 or year 2 should apply for support if they fall into any of the groups explained on this sheet.

Your child might be eligible for free school meals if you or your child receives any of the following:

- ☀ 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 guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- ☀ Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- ☀ Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- ☀ Universal Credit - your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

More information about who is eligible for free school meals and how to apply can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

Temporary extension to free school meals for some families with no recourse to public funds (NRPF)

Thousands of families with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) have become temporarily eligible for free school meals support until schools reopen for all children. To get this support over the summer holidays your child must be registered for free school meals. Apply as soon as possible to your school or local authority so that you don't miss out.

If you have NRPF your child can get free school meals if your household earnings are less than £16,190 per year and if:

- ✳ You are a Zambrano carer - A non-EEA National primary carer of a British child
- ✳ Your family is receiving support from a local authority under Section 17 of the Children's Act 1989 (for example, from social services or the NRPF team)
- ✳ Your family has been granted leave to remain with NRPF on the basis of family or private life grounds

All children from families who receive Section 4 support from the Home Office are also temporarily eligible for free school meals and do not need to have their income assessed.

More information about the extension of free school meals to some families with NRPF and how to apply can be found here: <https://www.project17.org.uk/resources/guide-to-accessing-support/free-school-meals-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

Read about why the free school meals eligibility criteria must be permanently extended to reach all children who need them regardless of immigration status here: <https://hacknemigrantcentre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Children-with-NRPF-The-need-for-FSM.pdf>

We hope that before schools reopen to all children, the free school meals eligibility criteria will be reviewed so that no child is left without this vital support.