

# Free school meals

If your child is not currently eligible for free school meals or you are waiting for a benefit application to be approved and need food and supplies urgently, please contact: [Kent Support and Assistance Service](#).

If your child is under 19 and in full-time education, and you receive certain benefits, you may be able to get free school meals for them.

## Apply online

Your eligibility will be checked and your application processed straight away. If your application is successful, the school will be notified and your child should start receiving their free school meal within 24 hours. We may ask for proof of benefit after you apply.

Once you have applied, you will not need to apply again unless we tell you to. If your child is eligible for free school meals with an active application on the 31 March 2018, they will remain eligible until 31 March 2023.

## Benefits of receiving free school meals

In Kent, 21% of children receive free school meals. If you are eligible and register your child will get:

- a choice of delicious, healthy hot meals every school day at no cost - this is worth £470 a year per child and recognised to improve behaviour and learning
- meals to cater for cultural, dietary, and religious requirements
- the chance to develop social skills by sitting with friends for a school meal
- a £10 food voucher per eligible child each week during the school holidays.

The school will receive additional funding to cover the catering cost and school funding grants, such as the Pupil Premium, based on their take up of free school meals.

Some schools and academies also offer reduced rates for school trips, clubs, after school care, [holiday activities](#) and uniform to children registered for free school meals.

# School holiday arrangements

We're working with schools to make sure that families who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals will receive vouchers to feed their children during school holidays.

You'll get a £10 voucher per eligible child, which can be spent in supermarkets and local shops.

If your child gets free school meals because they are in year 2 or below, you will still need to [apply for benefits-related free school meals](#) to get vouchers during the October break.

Contact your child's school if you are unsure what arrangements are being put in place for your family.

## Universal free school meals

If your child is in year R, year 1 or year 2 they are entitled to universal free school meals - all children in these year groups can get a free meal at school each day.

If you receive certain benefits, your child's school can also get some additional money to support your child's learning. We encourage you to [check your eligibility and apply online](#) as your child's school can benefit from the additional funding if you apply for the free school meals.

If you have any queries or require further information, please contact the School Office on 01474 569859.