



St. John of Beverley R.C. Primary School

a Diocese of Middlesbrough School

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Dear Parents/Guardians

Changes to free school meal eligibility under Universal Credit

The eligibility criteria for free school meals have been changed. This letter explains the changes and how they might affect you.

What are the new eligibility criteria?

Children are entitled to receive free school meals if they or their parents or guardians receive any of the benefits below.

- Universal Credit, provided they have an annual net income not exceeding £7,400 (£616.67 per month)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by HMRC
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

I don't currently claim free school meals – what does this mean for me?

If you think you might be eligible for free school meals, submit a claim by completing the registration form available from the school office or contact the local authority benefits team on 01482 394799. The information you provide will be used to check if you are in receipt of a qualifying benefit and, if you are on Universal Credit, that your earnings do not exceed the threshold. If you claim Universal Credit, your earnings will be assessed from up to three of your last Universal Credit assessment periods.



If you are eligible, the school will be notified. Your child will receive free school meals and the school will receive extra funding.

I am currently claiming free school meals – what does this mean for me?

Most people will not be affected by the new criteria. If you are currently claiming free school meals, but do not meet the new criteria, your child will continue to receive free school meals until the end of the Universal Credit rollout period. This will apply even if your earnings rise above the new threshold or if you stop being entitled to Universal Credit. The rollout period is currently scheduled to end in March 2022.

Once Universal Credit is fully rolled out, your child will keep their free school meal until the end of their current phase of education, i.e. primary or secondary.

Please note:

Children in Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2 are currently all entitled to Universal Free School meals.

The information above only applies to families who receive certain benefits and may be eligible for free school meals. We would encourage parents to apply if you think you may be eligible as the school currently receives funding of £1320 for every child who is entitled under the above criteria.

If you need any further information please do not hesitate to contact the school office or the local authority. You can also visit the free school meal website: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>