

Who do I contact if I have a query?

If you have a query regarding Free School Meals, please contact the Benefits Section on 03456 08 12 00. Staff at your child's / children's school will also be able to offer you advice.

What happens to the information I give?

All information is treated in the strictest confidence and is only held by Aberdeenshire Council.

School Clothing Grant

A School Clothing Grant may also be available to parents / guardians who meet with criteria laid down by Aberdeenshire Council. For further information call the Benefits Section on 03456 08 12 00, or ask at your child's/children's school.

If you have any difficulty in reading this leaflet please contact your Primary School Office

Aberdeenshire Council

Catering TODAY for a Healthy Future!

Menus prepared by the School Catering Service meet requirements set by the Scottish Government's Schools Health Promotion and Nutrition Act 2007 and contribute significantly towards pupils' daily intake of essential nutrients.

Menus provide plenty of choice and a nutritionally balanced diet over the week.

Across Aberdeenshire, Schools Teaching and Catering staff work to promote the importance of a balanced diet. School pupils who qualify for Free School Meals are encouraged to always take the full meal allowance.

Within School Catering we value your opinion regarding the service we provide.

If you would like to speak to a member of our team or require further information regarding any aspect of the service, please phone or e-mail us at;

01467 530723 or
Schoolmeals@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

*Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea –
the very best of Scotland*

A Guide on How to obtain Free School Meals



What are Free School Meals?

A Free School Meal is a school lunch provided free of charge by Aberdeenshire Council to children whose families meet the required criteria.

In addition, since January 2015 all Primary 1 to primary Primary 3 pupils have the option to take a free school meal every day. School children receive the same school meal as a paying pupil which is chosen through the interactive menu process within the classroom.

In a **Secondary School**: The child/children receive a daily credit allowance in the schools cafeteria to be used at lunchtime, equivalent to the value of a two-course meal on items chosen off the menu. Further details are available from your child's / children's School Office.

Is my child entitled to a Free School Meal?

Free School Meals are linked to the level of benefit / income a family receives and will be provided if :-

- a family is in receipt of Income Support or Pension Credit. (Guarantee Credit)
- a family is in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance (Income-Based) or Income related Employment Support Allowance.
- a parent is receiving Child Tax Credit (CTC) but not Working Tax Credit and your annual income is less than £16,105*.
- a parent is receiving Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit and their annual income is less than £6420*.
- parents receive help under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- any person between the age of 16 to 18 years old in receipt of any of the benefits listed above is eligible to claim Free School Meals.
- parents receive Universal Credit

Where can I obtain an Application Form from?

You can request an application form by calling the Benefits Section on 03456 08 12 00. Application forms are also available at your child's/children's school.

Please note, if you apply for Housing Benefit/Council Tax Reduction, the application form will also be used to claim for free school meals – you will not be required to complete a separate form. If your child is entitled to free school meals, the Benefits Section will send you a letter confirming this. You can take this letter to the school to claim your free school meals.

If you are not claiming Housing Benefit/Council Tax Reduction, the Benefits Section will also assess your entitlement to free school meals.

Do I have to provide any additional information along with my Application Form?

Proof of income **must be produced** along with the completed application form.

This can either be: -

- TC602 Tax Credit Award Notice for 2015/2016 from the Inland Revenue showing entitlement to Tax Credits.
- A letter from the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) confirming your entitlement to benefit.
- Confirmation of support from the National Asylum Support Service.

* These figures are subject to change from the Inland Revenue but are correct at present.

Who do I return the Application Form to?

Application Forms must be returned to; Aberdeenshire Council, PO Box 18533, Inverurie, AB51 5WX

You can also return the form to your local Benefits office.

What happens if my circumstances change?

If your circumstances change for any reason you must advise the Benefits Section immediately, by calling 03456 08 12 00 or by E-mail at benefits@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.

If you receive a Free School Meal which you are not entitled to, you will be required to pay back that money.

It is your right to make an application if you meet any of the criteria.

Aberdeenshire Council encourages ALL Parents of pupils who qualify, to apply for Free School Meals.