

## Why apply?

- School dinners provide a healthy, nutritious and tasty meal.
- Sitting down to eat a meal together helps to develop children's social skills.
- Research suggests that a school meal can improve a child's concentration.
- School meals will always meet high nutritional standards set by government.
- Menus are changed often, and examples can be viewed online at [www.wokingham.gov.uk/schools/schools-colleges/meals/menus/](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/schools/schools-colleges/meals/menus/)
- Schools will make sure that it is not obvious which children are getting free meals at lunchtime.
- If your child's primary school provides milk at break-time, your child will also be entitled to free milk.

## How to apply -

1. Collect a form from your child's school or download and print a copy of the application form at: [www.wokingham.gov.uk/schools/schools-colleges/meals/free-school-meals](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/schools/schools-colleges/meals/free-school-meals)
2. Take the form to your child's school.
3. Using the information on the form, the school will arrange an online check and let you know whether your child is eligible for free school meals.

This publication is produced by Wokingham Borough Council. If you or someone you know would like this leaflet in a different format (e.g. audio tape), please call (0118) 974 6000.



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BOROUGH COUNCIL

For more information

Visit: [www.wokingham.gov.uk/schools/schools-colleges/meals/free-school-meals](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/schools/schools-colleges/meals/free-school-meals)

Or call us on (0118) 974 6000

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# Free School Meals

Are you missing out on over  
£300 a year?

Could your child be tucking into a  
free school meal?

Don't miss out - apply now!



## In Wokingham Borough the way to apply for free school meals is fast and simple.

### Don't miss out - apply now!

Did you know that in most cases, you now don't need to show any paper proof of benefit\* when applying for free school meals?

Wokingham Borough Council provides schools with a fast and confidential online checking service:

In addition to your child's name and date of birth, the only additional information that schools need to collect on the application form is your own -

- Name.
- Date of birth.
- National Insurance number.

The above details must be for the person receiving a qualifying benefit - if you receive one of these benefits your child may be entitled to free school meals. There is a list of these benefits on the next page.

*\* Unfortunately there are still a few occasions where we are not able to confirm whether you are entitled using the online check. If this is the case schools may still need to ask you to provide paper proofs of benefit.*

## Can my child get free school meals?

To be entitled to free school meals for your child you must receive one of the following:

- Income support.
- Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance.
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance.
- Child Tax Credit, provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit\* and have an annual income that does not exceed £16,190.
- The Guarantee element of the State Pension Credit.

Children attending nursery school or nursery class at a primary school can receive a free school meal only on days they attend the setting before and after lunch. If they attend only in the morning or afternoon, they will not be eligible for free school meals on those days.

*\*If you continue to receive Working Tax Credit during the four week period immediately after your employment stops or after you start to work fewer than 16 hours per week, your child would still be eligible for free school meals for this four week period.*

**This information is accurate at the time of printing but it is subject to Government policy so may change in future.**



### The new checking system means that:

- You don't have to show paper proof of benefit.
- You don't have to re-apply every year.
- Your information is confidential.
- Your child will get their free school meals sooner because the process is faster.

### Not just a Free School Meal

Your child may also be entitled to free or reduced charges for other things. Please contact your child's school for details.

By applying for free school meals this will trigger additional resources for the school as a whole.