

## How to apply for free school meals

### Will I qualify for free school meals?

To get free school meals you must be in receipt of one of the following qualifying benefits:

- Income Support (IS)
- Child Tax Credit, provided you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual taxable income (as assessed by The Inland Revenue) which does not exceed £16,040
- Income-Based Job Seekers' Allowance (IB JSA)
- Employment Support Allowance (Income Related) (ESA (IRA))
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Where a parent is entitled to Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after their employment ceases, or after they start to work less than 16 hours per week, their children are entitled to free school lunches.

### How do I apply for free school meals?

You can apply by telephone - call Dorset Direct on 01305 221000.

You will need to tell us your:

- Name
- Date of birth
- National Insurance Number (or your registered asylum seeker number)
- Child's details - name, date of birth, and school for which you want free school meals

We will make automated checks to confirm your entitlement, and if you qualify, we will tell you immediately, and then write to you within three working days of your call to us to confirm it.

Alternatively, you can apply using the paper application form at <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/index.jsp?articleid=369746>.

Paper forms are also available from your child's school, some libraries, or from Dorset Direct - please contact us and a form can be sent to you.

Send the completed form to Dorset Direct (the address is on the form) Please note - you do not have to send any documents to show your entitlement to one of the above benefits. We will make automated checks to confirm your entitlement, and if you qualify, we will write to you within three working days of receiving your form.

(For both telephone and paper applications - If the automated benefit check does not work, then we may need to ask you to supply documentary evidence. We apologise in advance for any inconvenience this may cause.)