

Who do I contact if I have a query?

If you have a query regarding Free School Meals, please contact the Support and Advice Team on 01467 533400 or via email at fsm@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

What happens to the information I give?

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



If you have any difficulty reading this leaflet please contact us at 01467 533400

Aberdeenshire Council

Catering TODAY for a Healthy Future!



Scottish Government's Nutritional Requirements for food and drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2008 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, School 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.

The School Catering team values 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 e-mail
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 from families on a low income. Other children will not be able to see that your child is in receipt of free school meals.

Children who attend primary school and qualify for this entitlement will be provided with a free school meal. An online payment system is in operation which will recognise when a child is entitled. Although a payment is not required parents and carers are advised to register to access this system to allow them to view daily meal choices a pupil is making.

Children who attend secondary school will be given a daily credit allowance to be used in the school dining hall at lunchtime. The credit allowance is the equivalent value of a two course meal. This automatically goes onto a pupil's account at the start of each day. Any sum remaining after the lunch period is removed.

Can my child get free school meals?

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 an annual income of less than £18,725*.
- a parent is receiving Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit and their annual income is less than £8,717*.
- parents receive help under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- any person between the age of 16 to 18 years old is in receipt of any of the benefits listed above.
- parent receive Universal Credit but only with a take home pay of £726 or less.

How do I apply?

You can apply by going to our website at www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/fmsmcg and complete the online form. Alternatively, please contact us on 01467 533400.

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 application.

If your child is entitled to free school meals, you will be sent a letter confirming this. Schools are notified directly by the Free School Meals Team and details are updated accordingly.

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 from HM Revenue & Customs 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 HM Revenue & Customs but are correct at present.

What happens if my circumstances change?

If your circumstances change for any reason you must advise the Free School Meals Team immediately, by calling 01467 533400 or by E-mail at fsm@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

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

School Clothing Grants

If your child qualifies for Free School Meals they will also be eligible for a School Clothing Grant.

School Clothing Grants are currently £120 per child in primary school and £150 per child in secondary school. Payment of grants will be made direct to your nominated bank account.

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

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

