

July 2022

Free School Meals/School Uniform/Physical Education Uniform Allowance 2022-23

With the new school year approaching we want to provide an update on 2022/23 applications.

All parents/guardians are required to apply on-line via the EA website <https://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals>.

Parents/Guardians whose child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs (Stage 5) and requires a special diet should contact the Meals and Uniform Section for a paper application form if they wish to apply under the special diet criterion.

The Education Authority continues to seek your support to promote awareness of Free School Meals and Clothing Allowances and to encourage all potential applicants to apply early with the correct documentation for the support available.

Due to the large volume of applications, parents/guardians should be encouraged to apply by the end of July to enable their support to be processed and be in place for their children for the new school year.

All parents/guardians should be informed of the importance of providing valid Bank or Building Society account details in the claimant's own name. Payments cannot be made into Post Office accounts. Claimants should also be advised that where they are in receipt of Income Support, Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance or Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit, they must upload a Proof of Benefits Letter with their application. This can be obtained via the following link <https://secure.dwp.gov.uk/get-a-proof-of-benefit-letter/> . It will take at least five days to be sent. Parents/guardians who are in receipt of Universal Credit or Tax Credits need to upload proof of entitlement with their online applications.

Free School Meals / Uniform Allowance Helpdesk

The Free Schools Meals and Uniform Allowance Helpdesk is operated by staff across the EA Free School Meals/Uniform Allowance service.

It is available to assist parents and guardians who may have any queries. The Helpdesk operates Monday – Friday from 9am to 4.30pm and can be contacted via email: mealsanduniform@eani.org.uk The telephone number which should be used for all enquiries is 028 90418044.

“To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be.”

Education Authority

40 Academy Street, Belfast, BT1 2NQ T: +44 (0)28 9056 4000 F: +44 (0)28 9033 1714 W: www.eani.org.uk

E-mails and telephone calls to individual Free School Meals/Uniform staff will be diverted to the Helpdesk for response.

Further information including eligibility criteria for the 2022-23 school year and a list of Frequently Asked Questions to assist with any parental queries can be accessed by logging onto www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals.

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