

Free School Meals and Uniform/Physical Education Allowances for School Year 2024/25

I would like to provide an update on the upcoming 2024/25 application process for Free School Meals and School Uniform/Physical Education Clothing Allowances.

All parents/guardians are required to apply via [EA Connect](#)

This includes parents/carers whose child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs (Stage 3) and requires a special diet and who do not qualify for Free School Meals under the standard financial eligibility criteria. They will be directed to the relevant online application for Free School Meals under the Special Diet criterion.

The Education Authority (EA) issues communications on the EA website and social media channels to inform parents/carers of the process for the coming year. Parents/carers who are currently in receipt of support for the 2023/24 school year and who have not yet made an application for 2024/25 will receive an e-mail highlighting the need to apply and the process to do so.

We continue to seek your support to promote awareness of Free School Meals and Uniform Allowances and to encourage all potential applicants to apply for the support available before **26 July** to ensure all is in place for the new school year in September 2024.

We have attached an informational leaflet outlining the process and what is required to apply.

It is important for all applicants to read and understand what supporting documentation is required for their application. Information on this can also be found on the [EA website](#)

Applicants in receipt of Income Support, Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance or Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit must upload a Proof of Benefit Letter, which can be obtained by visiting this [link](#). Parents in receipt of Tax Credits or Universal Credit do not need a Proof of Benefit letter but must upload relevant evidence of their Tax Credits/Universal Credit.

“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

A 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 carers who may have any queries. The Helpdesk operates Monday – Friday from 9am to 4.0pm and can be contacted via email:

mealsanduniform@eani.org.uk.

The telephone number which should be used for all enquiries is 028 9041 8044.

Further information including eligibility criteria for the 2024/25 school year and a list of Frequently Asked Questions to assist with any parental queries can be accessed by visiting our [website](#).

Thank you for your continued assistance in relation to the provision of free school meals and uniform grants to eligible children.

Chris Scott
Head of Admissions and Financial Support

Email: chris.scott@eani.org.uk

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