

PLEASE KEEP THESE NOTES FOR YOUR INFORMATION (2015/16)

Due to the high volume of work during June/July/August it may take up to 6 weeks to process your claim. Telephone calls to the office will only delay the process.

Only fully completed and signed application forms with proof of benefit(s)/Tax Credits received will be processed.

Criteria:

1. Only parents/guardians in receipt of Income Support/Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance/Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance/Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit/Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit and have an annual taxable income of £16,190 or less or are an Asylum Seeker supported by the Home Office National Asylum Support Service (NASS) are eligible to apply.
2. Where the above criteria do not apply, **free school meals only** can be awarded if a child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs and is designated to require a special diet. A separate application form can be obtained from the Meals and Uniform Section.
3. Students attending Colleges of Further Education cannot be provided with an allowance for school uniform but if their course is not a paid training course and includes Physical Education they are entitled to apply for an allowance for Physical Education clothing.
4. Further Education students who have reached the age of 18 years on or before 31 July are not entitled to free school meals.
5. Children attending **Nursery Schools, Nursery Units in Primary Schools or Reception Classes** are not entitled to assistance with school uniform.

Parents/Guardians/Claimants Are Responsible For:

- a) **Submitting to the Meals and Uniform Section a fully completed application form** which contains the names of all children in their actual custody who are included in the payments for Child Benefit or Child Tax Credit. Children's names must be entered as they appear on the Birth Certificate unless they have been legally changed. If a pupil receives benefit in their own name then they must complete and sign the application form.
- b) **Providing evidence of entitlement.**

Before returning the application form to the Meals and Uniform Section it should be stamped by the office paying the benefit, confirming that Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance/Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance/Income Support/Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit is being paid.

Or

If applying under Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit **all pages** of your Tax Credits Award notice (TC602) for year 6/4/15 to 5/4/16 must be returned with your completed application form. If you do not receive a TC602 notice you may use your Tax Credits Annual Review notice (TC603R) for the year ended April 2015. This TC603R must state on page 1 "Check before ___/___/___". An Annual Review notice which states on page 1 "Reply before ___/___/___" cannot be accepted. Photocopies cannot be accepted. The Tax Credits Award notice issued by HM Revenue & Customs should state the names of qualifying children on the award and the amount of the annual income. The annual income is the joint income of both parents if a two-parent family is making the application.

Asylum Seekers must attach evidence to show that they are supported by the Home Office National Asylum Support Service (NASS) or that they have applied for support.

- c) **Notifying the Meals and Uniform Section immediately of any changes** in family circumstances or benefit entitlement.
- d) Providing the correct Bank/Building Society account details of the person claiming benefit.

Notes:

1. **Uniform allowances for pupils who have reached 16 years of age on or before 1 July 2015 will not be paid until verification of their return to school or college for the 2015/2016 school year has been received in September.** A form will be sent to the school/college requesting this information.
2. Uniform allowances must be used for the purchase of items of school uniform or physical education clothing and the Education Authority reserves the right to verify that allowances have been used for this purpose.
3. A uniform allowance claim must not be made by more than one parent/guardian/applicant as only one uniform allowance per pupil is payable during the school year.
4. Only one form is required per family.
5. Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit is Income Support for people aged 60 and over and is paid by the Pension Service, Social Security Agency, Carlisle House, PO Box 205, Londonderry, BT48 6YB
6. Income Related Employment and Support Allowance is paid by the Employment and Support Allowance Maintenance Processing Team, James House, 2 Cromac Avenue, Gasworks Business Park, Ormeau Road, Belfast BT7 2JA
7. Payment of the uniform allowance will not be made before 1 July 2015.
8. The Meals and Uniform Section will process applications in order of date of receipt.
9. Entitlement will not be backdated.
10. **Only parents/guardians who have made a new claim will receive a letter advising them when the meals will start. The school(s) will also be informed.**

Uniform Allowance for 2015/2016 will be as follows:

Primary School pupils (born on or before 1 July 2011)	Total grant		£35.75
Secondary School and Special School pupils:	<u>Uniform</u>	<u>PE</u>	<u>Total</u>
Under 15 years of age at 1 August 2015	£51.00	£22.00	£73.00
15 years of age or over on 1 August 2015	£56.00	£22.00	£78.00
Pupils at Colleges of Further Education who are not in receipt of any financial support which includes provision for clothing suitable for physical education and where physical education is part of their course	PE		£22.00

All information will be treated in confidence. The information provided on the Free School Meals/School Uniform application form may be made available to other bodies for the purposes of preventing and detecting crime. The Meals and Uniform Section reserves the right to take whatever steps it considers necessary to verify the information given on the application form. Any person wilfully making a false statement in support of this application will be liable to prosecution.