

My ref: FSM Entitlement

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People and Communities

Executive Director: Wendi Ogle-Welbourn

Parents / Carers of
Children in Cambridgeshire

Education Welfare Benefit Team
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Dear Parent / Carer

Free School Meal Entitlement and its benefits

We understand that the times we are living in continue to be uncertain and challenging. Alongside this many families are facing changes in their financial circumstances.

Did you know that if your child is eligible for income related Free School Meals they will be also entitled to;

- A free Christmas holiday scheme place, through the [Holiday Activities and Food Programme](#) ; and
- A £30 food voucher through the [Direct Food Voucher Scheme](#), to support food costs during the Christmas Holiday Period.

In addition to these benefits your child's school will also receive Pupil Premium, which is extra money to support the educational outcomes of children from lower income families.

If you believe that you now meet the following criteria, and you have not applied previously, please complete an online application [at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals) to receive an instant response;

- Income Support.
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance.
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance.
- Child Tax Credit - but no element of Working Tax Credit - and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)) that does not exceed £16,190.
- If you are supported under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit.
- Working Tax Credit during the four week period immediately after your employment finishes or after you start to work less hours per week.
- Universal Credit with an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400 (as from 1 April 2018).

If you have previously applied or been eligible for free school meals, you need not re-apply, (unless there has been a change of name) as we will continue to re-check your entitlement each month and will notify you should you become re-eligible.

If your child receives Universal Infant Free School Meals (in Reception, Y1 and Y2) but you do not meet the criteria for income-related Free School Meals, you will **not** be eligible for a supermarket voucher.

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

The HAF programme is offering free holiday scheme places and experiences to primary and secondary school aged children and young people during the Christmas holidays. Eligible children will be able to access up to 16 hours for free at a holiday scheme or family experience. The sessions will offer children a nutritious meal, a variety of fun experiences, activities and/or sports and the opportunity to socialise and with other children or young people.

Additionally, as a unique Christmas offer, each family who attend a HAF holiday scheme/family experience will be offered a hamper containing ingredients for a nutritious main meal and desert. Physical activity ideas and resources such as a mini football, cones, skipping rope and Frisbee will also be included.

Further information and to book your place please see our webpage [Holiday Activities and Food Programme](#) .

If you have any queries regarding the HAF programme, please email HAF@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Direct Food Voucher Scheme

As a part of our Household Support Fund, children eligible for income related Free School Meals are eligible to receive a £30 food voucher. These vouchers will automatically be issued to the nominated parent or carer, by email or text, on 17th December (for those eligible on or before 6th December). Any children who become eligible before 4th January, will be issued their food voucher, following their successful Free School Meal application.

Further information regarding the Direct Food Voucher Scheme, or wider support available as a part of the Household Support Fund, is available on our webpage [Household Support Scheme](#).

If you have any queries regarding the Direct Food Voucher Scheme, please email winter.support@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

If you have any queries in relation to free school meals entitlement, please contact our Education Welfare Benefits Team on ewb.fsm@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan Lewis
Service Director: Education
Cambridgeshire County Council & Peterborough City Council