

# FREE SCHOOL MEALS ONLINE APPLICATION

Guide for Schools



## ONLINE FREE SCHOOL MEALS PROCESS

Plymouth City Council has developed an online Free School Meals form for parents and carers to apply for free school meals in Plymouth.

After a successful trial, it is being rolled out to all schools, start date 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2019.

The benefits of the online application are that the parent can apply in the comfort of their own home, at a time that suits them.

If they are not sure if they would be eligible, it is an easy way for the parent to establish eligibility without the face to face conversation, which some people may prefer.

The online form is more secure than the paper forms, as everything is done online.

During the trial, we have had a number of new claims from families who had no idea they were entitled.

You are reminded that for every child on your roll who is entitled to free school meals, the school receives the Pupil Premium, which is vital for boosting your budget.

Schools can promote the online application to parents – you could update your web pages, put a Facebook / Twitter post out to parents, and send out in a school newsletter. Please feel free to use content from the PCC free school meals page to ensure you have the up to date information.

Parents / Carers can access the Free School Meals web page here:

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/schoolseducationchildcareskillsandemployability/freeschoolmeals>

To access the application, click on **How to apply** then **APPLY FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS**

They can also download a paper copy to either pass to school or send in to Windsor House directly.

If the parent has more than one child they can apply all on one form, even if they attend different schools.

**Once an application is submitted** – an email will be sent automatically to the school email address given, to confirm the student’s details and that they attend the school. Exception to this, is if there are several children on one form that attend different schools, you will not get the confirmation email if this happens as this will come directly from [freeschoolmeals2@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:freeschoolmeals2@plymouth.gov.uk).

School will get an email similar to this –

# SELF SERVICE

Secure, simple and convenient

Dear SCHOOL NAME,

We have received an online free school meal application for STUDENT NAME. Please can you confirm that this child's information matches that on your system and that they do attend SCHOOL NAME.

Kind regards

Plymouth City Council

## Online services

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## Contact us

Phone 01752 668000

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Please forward this email to [freeschoolmeals2@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:freeschoolmeals2@plymouth.gov.uk) and confirm the student attends and then this will move to the eligibility check which we carry out here in the office.

As with current eligibility checks done now, there are a few possible results –

**Eligible** – The parent and school receive an email to confirm they are eligible and the start date.

**NOT Eligible** – The parent and school receive an email to confirm they are not eligible

**Pending** – The parent and school receive an email to ask for evidence of benefit to be taken either to school or Windsor House. If no information is forthcoming, the case will be closed after 4 weeks.

**Check Data** – The information supplied by the parent is incorrect or they have not been found on the system. The parent will be asked to re-submit.

As with the current situation, all eligible children will have an end date of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

If you require any further information, please contact [freeschoolmeals2@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:freeschoolmeals2@plymouth.gov.uk) or telephone 01752 307410.