



Birchwood High School

your dreams, your future, our challenge

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to all parent/carers to explain how you may be eligible to claim for Free School Meals and other associated benefits for your child. Whilst this is a sensitive topic, with rising unemployment and the fragile state of our economy, you may find this a useful financial benefit to help your child at Birchwood High School. Obviously, we are very discreet about this matter and with our cash-less biometric system no one is made aware of who is paying and who is not.

IMPORTANT: If your child is already eligible for FSM at your current primary school, you must:

- **Reapply** to Herts County Council as your child is moving from Key Stage 2 (primary education) to Key Stage 3 (secondary education).
- If your child attends an Essex County Council primary school, you need to **reapply to Hertfordshire** County Council not Essex County Council as Birchwood is in Hertfordshire.

In order to apply, you simply register with Herts County Council using the web link:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/business/services-for-businesses-charities-and-other-public-bodies/fsm-eligibility-checking-service.aspx>

or you can phone 0300 123 4048 or email: freeschoolmeals@hertfordshire.gov.uk

The application process itself takes about 10 minutes.

You are eligible to apply if any of the following relate to you:

- **Income Support**
- **Income-based Jobseekers Allowance**
- **Income-related Employment and Support Allowance**
- **Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999**
- **The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit**
- **Child Tax Credit** (as long as you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and you don't get more than **£16,190** a year)
- **Working Tax Credit run-on** (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- **Universal Credit** (with annual earned income of no more than **£7,400** after tax and not including any benefits you get).

By applying and registering for Free School Meals you are also helping us as a school as the Government applies an additional 'Pupil Premium' grant based on the number of students who have received free school meals at any time during the last six years. This funding also enables us to pay £1 each day for breakfast before 8:45am for all Free School Meals students.

Yours sincerely

Mr Sam Griffin

Principal

Principal, Mr Sam Griffin

Parsonage Lane, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 5BD

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A full list of Directors is on our website