

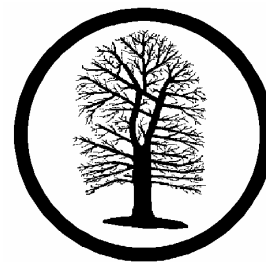
Birchfield Community Primary School

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Head Teacher: Mr Richard Culham B.Ed Hons

08 November 2010

Dear Parent / Carer

We have recently received information from County regarding a new way of checking whether you are entitled to claim for Free School Meals.

It is important that if you feel you are entitled to receive this facility that you complete the appropriate paperwork as claiming for Free School Meals, even though your child may not want to take up the option of the free meal, does also entitle you to claim for the Give It A Go funding and also the possibility of assistance with school trip payments etc.

Below is a letter that has been received from County which hopefully out lines the new procedure.

Checking Free School Meal Entitlement

If your child(ren) is/are eligible for Free School Meals but you have not registered their entitlement both you and their school may be missing out.

Registering your entitlement to free school meals may well bring extra Government funding into the school, which will benefit all children at the school.

If your child is eligible for Free School Meals the value of meals provided over the course of this school year will be £410.40 for Infants, £421.80 for Juniors and £440.80 for Middle and Secondary School pupils. If your child is eligible and you are not claiming you are missing out on this money which is rightfully yours. Your child could have a healthy and nutritious meal provided for them each day and you could significantly reduce your shopping bills each week by cutting out the need to provide a packed lunch.

It is now much quicker and easier to check whether or not you are entitled to free schools meals. You no longer need to provide any paperwork – you just need to provide a few key personal details and give us your permission to check your eligibility on line.

If you receive one of the following support payments you are entitled to receive a free school meal for you child:

- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- Employment Support Allowance (Income Related) (ESA(IR));
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit;

- Child Tax Credit (CTC) providing you do not also receive Working Tax Credit (WTC) and have an annual income as assessed by the Inland Revenue of less than £16,190.

You can fill in a green claim form, which is available from the school office or a copy can be downloaded if you log onto

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/irj/public/services/directory/service?rid=/wpcontent/Sites/SCC/Web%20Pages/Services/Services/CYP/Claim%20free%20school%20meals>

Just fill in sections (A) and (B) and sign the Declaration at the bottom of the page. You can leave section (C) blank. You then need to either return the form to the school office, who will send or fax it to County Hall. Alternatively you can post it directly to

The Contract Support Team
B/C Link
County Hall
Taunton TA1 4DY

Alternatively you can now request a Free School Meal entitlement check by telephone – just call 0845 3459122 and ask to be put through to the Contract Support Team. You will need to have to hand your date of birth and National Insurance number, along with the name and date of birth of each of your children and details of the school(s) they attend. We will log onto a Central Government database which allows us to check whether or not you are entitled to claim free school meals for your children. We will not see any details about the benefits you claim or your income – we will just get an on screen result which tells us whether or not you are entitled. Often we will be able to make the check while you are on the phone. If not we will call you back as soon as possible to let you know whether or not you are entitled. If you are entitled we will also inform your child's school so that they can arrange for meals to be provided for them as soon as possible.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Yours sincerely

Richard Culham
Head Teacher