

## Welfare Rights service

We provide free and confidential help and advice on a range of subjects including cash benefits and tax credits to all Lancashire residents.

Advisors are based around the county. They give advice over the phone and hold sessions as well as helping with benefit appeals.

You can also visit our website for a wide range of information, including an enquiry form and leaflets and booklets to download or order free of charge.

To speak to an advisor or order a leaflet phone **0845 053 0013** - Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm.

Visit our website:

[www.lancashire.gov.uk/welfarerights](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/welfarerights)

Email us: [infowrs@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:infowrs@lancashire.gov.uk)

Or write to us: **Welfare Rights Service  
FREEPOST  
Preston  
PR1 8BR**

Postage is free so please don't include a stamp

## How can I find out more?

If you want to know more about the education benefits described in this leaflet please contact your local education office.

South  
(PRESTON, SOUTH RIBBLE,  
WEST LANCASHIRE AND CHORLEY)  
Area Education Office  
Joint Divisional Offices  
East Cliff, Preston PR1 3JT  
**(01772) 532253**

**Pupil Access Team  
Children and Young People Directorate  
County Hall, P.O. Box 61, Preston**

The information in this leaflet was correct on 1 May 2012.  
If you have any queries your local Education Office will be happy to advise you.  
Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this leaflet.  
Lancashire County Council are not able to accept any responsibility for inaccuracy.

**Your local library can provide  
information about Lancashire County  
Council Services.**

**The main libraries are:**

South  
**LEYLAND** 01772 432804  
leyland.library@lancashire.gov.uk  
**ORMSKIRK** - 01695 573448  
ormskirk.library@lancashire.gov.uk  
**SKELMERSDALE** - 01695 720312  
skelmersdale.library@lancashire.gov.uk  
**CHORLEY** - 01257 277222  
chorley.library@lancashire.gov.uk  
**PRESTON** - 01772 532676  
preston.library@lancashire.gov.uk

# Education Benefits

Free school meals



School clothing



Free travel



Questions and  
Answers

Lancashire  
County Council

## Can your child benefit from our help?

***If you have a child at school you may be able to claim benefits from Lancashire County Council. Trying to understand all the benefits and work out what you are entitled to can sometimes be confusing. This leaflet helps to answer some of the questions that parents often ask about the help that is available.***

***Please note that the benefits mentioned in this leaflet are NOT available to pupils who attend independent schools.***

## Free school meals



### Can my child have free school meals?

Yes, if you get:

- Income Support (IS);
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA-IR);
- Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance (IB-JSA);
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- Child Tax Credit and are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and your annual income, as assessed by the Inland Revenue, does not exceed £16,190 (April 11).
- Working Tax Credit 'run on' - the payment you receive for a further four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.

This is a national policy; therefore, free school meals cannot be granted on a discretionary basis.

**PLEASE NOTE** if you get free meals and your child has to go on work experience, you will be able to claim a refund for any lunches you have provided. Ask for details from the school.

### How do I claim?

If you have not claimed for free school meals before you need to ring your local area education office and provide them with your name, date of birth and national insurance number and they will be able to confirm your

entitlement immediately over the telephone. Please note that the caller must be the benefit claimant.

Once your application has been granted for free school meals you never need to complete another application. The area education office will check on a regular basis that your children are still entitled to the meals. They will advise you if you are no longer eligible. Claimants should still contact the area office if you are no longer entitled to any benefits.

## School Clothing assistance



### Do you offer any assistance with the cost of providing school uniform?

From 1 April 2006, we agreed to discontinue the issue of school clothing grants previously available to families eligible for free school meals.

However, in cases where very exceptional circumstances exist, we will exercise discretion and consider applications for assistance.

Parents/carers are advised to view our website [www.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk), on the A - Z select 'S' for school clothing grants.

## Free travel to and from school



### Can my child get free travel?

As a guide, travelling expenses are normally paid to pupils who attend the nearest suitable school and the distance by the shortest suitable walking route from home is:

- (a) Two miles or more if your child is under 8 years of age, or
- (b) Two miles or more for pupils over eight years if entitled to free school meals or whose parents receive maximum amount of working tax credit

(low income families) until end of year 6.  
(c) Three miles or more for pupils aged 8 and over. Entitlement to free travel under this policy ceases at the end of year 11 in secondary school.

There is an extended entitlement for pupils whose parents are on low incomes (i.e. pupils eligible for free school meals or parents receiving maximum amount of working tax credit) who attend secondary schools. Those pupils (year 7-11) will receive assistance if they attend one of their three nearest secondary schools and the distance to the school attended is between two and six miles.

In addition pupils from low income families (definition above) who attend a school other than the nearest school on the grounds of the parental religion and/or belief will receive assistance with travel costs if the school attended is the nearest of the parents religion or belief and the distance is between two and fifteen miles.

In some circumstances pupils with special educational needs (SEN) who do not meet the above mileage limit, may be eligible for transport as a result of their special educational needs.

Ask for more details from your local education office.

## Other questions you may have?



***I have a child with special educational needs, will I still be able to claim the benefits in this leaflet?***

Yes, you can still claim these benefits if you have a child with special educational needs.

***I have a child with special educational needs who will be starting school soon, is there anyone I could discuss any problems with?***

Yes, if you have any worries get in touch with your local education office and ask for the senior SEN officer. They will do all they can to help you.

***How do I find out if I'm entitled to Income Support or other benefits?***

Ring Welfare Rights for a benefit check on 0845053 0013 or ask at your local Job Centre Plus Office.