

Corporate, Customer and Community Services • Free School Meals Team  
PO BOX 415 • Carlisle • CA6 4SJ  
T: 01228 606060 • E: [freeschoolmeals.admin@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:freeschoolmeals.admin@cumbria.gov.uk)

All Cumbria Schools

29 June 2022

## Free School Meals & Clothing Grants Update

Please could all schools ask the parents/carers of students in receipt of Free School Meals to avoid submitting duplicate applications.

Over the course of the last 4 weeks, we have received 2,120 FSM applications however more than 600 of those were reapplications from existing parents and carers with already granted claims.

Parents and carers should only submit applications if they do not have an existing claim for their child, for example:

- wish to check their eligibility to add a new child or;
- they have taken care of a child on FSM and need the claim moved into their name

They should avoid submitting applications for students where they already have a granted claim.

Duplicate applications are automatically rejected by the Citizen Portal upon submission which often leads to confusion to carers wondering why they are not eligible (even though they are already in receipt) and can take a substantial amount of time to resolve them on the back-end system when they appear in high volumes.

If a parent or carer wishes to notify us of a change of details (such as a name change or change of address), they should contact us on the telephone number or email address on the website and we can advise them and action as appropriate directly.

Additionally, Citizen Portal undertakes its eligibility checks against central government records based off an applicant's Date of Birth, Surname and National Insurance number therefore if a parent is refused on the online system – again, they should contact us directly rather than trying to resubmit the claim in the hopes of the system giving a different response as we will be able to inform them of their options and check for any data errors.

New applications do not need to be made when transitioning from Infant to Juniors, or from Primary to Secondary School as the system is updated by School Admissions and the Inclusion Teams.

If you have any queries or need further information and clarity, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

**N Dixon**  
FSM Team