

Universal Primary Free School Meals

Phased Rollout of Universal Primary Free School Meals

In September 2022, the rollout of Universal Primary Free School Meals (UPFSM) across Wales began, starting with learners in Reception. The policy is part of the Co-operation Agreement between the Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru, which will see free school meals extended to all primary school learners over the next two years.

Following the successful roll-out of UPFSM to Reception, Years 1-4, and eligible Nursery age pupils in Rhondda Cynon Taf, the next phase is to commence from 8th April 2024, where the offer will be extended to include all Year 5 and 6 pupils and eligible Nursery pupils.

Frequently Asked Questions – Universal Primary Free School Meals (UPFSM)

Q: Do I need to apply for a Universal Primary Free School Meal when my child becomes eligible?

A: Parents do not need to apply for the Universal Primary Free School Meal, but those who would have previously applied for a Free School Meal should still do.

Q: My child was in receipt of a Free School Meal but now gets a Universal Primary Free School Meal, why do I need to still complete an application?

A: The application for Free School Meals is linked to other schemes including uniform, if an application is not made, your child will miss out on associated benefits. Please apply here: -

[Free School meals - Apply for free school meals | Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council \(rctcbc.gov.uk\)](https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk)

Q: If my child is eligible for UPFSM but going on a school trip - will they still receive a meal?

A: Yes, a packed lunch will be provided for that day.

Q: If my child is ill and does not attend school, will I receive a payment instead?

A: No, payments are not provided for a pupil who is not in school to receive their UPFSM.

Q: My child receives their education at an alternative setting to a State Educational Establishment. Are they eligible for UPFSM?

A: No, the Welsh Government UPFSM grant conditions state that the provision is only available for a pupil in a state setting.

Q: I am not sure my child will eat the food provided every day – can they still bring a packed lunch?

A: We would strongly encourage all eligible pupils to take up their UPFSM, and we offer a variety of choice to support this. If, however, you do prefer to provide a packed lunch, then you can do so.

Q: My child requires a Medically Prescribed Diet – can they still receive a school meal?

Medically Prescribed Dietary Requirement

Does your primary age child have a food allergy/intolerance or a medical condition, which would require them to need a Medically Prescribed Diet?

If so, Catering Services has an online facility where a medically prescribed diet can be requested.

If you need to register your child as having a medically prescribed dietary requirement, then please complete the Form below. You will need to upload medical evidence, from a registered medical practitioner or dietitian, confirming the child's dietary requirement(s).

The medically prescribed diet application can be accessed at:

<http://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/MedicallyPrescribedDiet>

Q: My child already has a Medically Prescribed diet in place but until now I have paid for their meal. When they become eligible for UPFSM, will I have to re-apply for the diet?

A: If there has been no change to the dietary needs, there is no need to re-apply for Medically Prescribed Diet. If anything has changed, we will need to make the necessary arrangements before your child receives a meal. If you are in any doubt as to what dietary information we currently hold, please do contact us at cateringservices@rctcbc.gov.uk.

If you would like further clarification on any of the answers provided above, or, have a question we have not yet answered, please contact us at cateringservices@rctcbc.gov.uk or call 01443 281141.