

10 July 2020

**To: All Principals**

### **Free School Meals/School Uniform/Physical Education Clothing Allowance 2020-21**

The Education Authority (EA) has been continuing to process applications for Free School Meals / Uniform Grants / Physical Education Clothing allowances throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. With the new academic year approaching we want to provide an update on 2020/21 applications.

#### **Current Eligible Families**

Parents/guardians who are currently in receipt of support for the 2019/20 school year will receive a pre-populated application form from EA, which they are required to complete and return as soon as possible to help avoid any delays. Forms to begin arriving week commencing 6 July 2020.

#### **New Applicants**

This year we have also introduced a new online application form for new applicants. Parents/guardians will be required to complete the form and upload supporting documentation to verify they are in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits. Both the paper based form and online form are accessible from the EA website – <https://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals>

Applicants can also request an application form from the Meals and Uniform Section (contact details below).

Forms prior to 2020-21 should not be given out to parents/guardians and should be discarded.

Parents/Guardians whose child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs (Stage 5) and requires a special diet should contact the Meals and Uniform Section if they wish to apply under the special diet criteria.

It is important that a school should not give free school meals to any pupil until the Education Authority issues authorisation.

The Education Authority continues to seek your support to promote awareness of Free School Meals and Clothing Allowances and to encourage all potential applicants to apply for the support available. Further information including eligibility criteria for the 2020-21 school year can be accessed by logging onto [www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals](http://www.eani.org.uk/financial-help/free-school-meals)

“To inspire, support and challenge all our Children and Young People to be the best that they can be.”

**Education Authority, Meals and Uniform Section**

**3 Charlemont Place, The Mall, Armagh, BT61 9AX T: +44 (0)28 3751 2523 W: [www.eani.org.uk](http://www.eani.org.uk)**

## **Free School Meals / Uniform Grants Helpdesk**

Our Free Schools Meals and Uniform Grants Helpdesk is available, to assist any parents/guardians who may have any queries. The Helpdesk operates Monday – Friday, during office hours and can be contacted via email:

Armagh      [MealsandUniforms-Armagh@eani.org.uk](mailto:MealsandUniforms-Armagh@eani.org.uk)  
Ballymena   [MealsandUniforms-Ballymena@eani.org.uk](mailto:MealsandUniforms-Ballymena@eani.org.uk)  
Belfast      [MealsandUniforms-Belfast@eani.org.uk](mailto:MealsandUniforms-Belfast@eani.org.uk)  
Dundonald   [MealsandUniforms-Dundonald@eani.org.uk](mailto:MealsandUniforms-Dundonald@eani.org.uk)  
Omagh       [MealsandUniforms-Omagh@eani.org.uk](mailto:MealsandUniforms-Omagh@eani.org.uk)

We have also compiled a list of Frequently Asked Questions on our website to assist with any parental queries.

## **Meals and Uniform Section**

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