



Nottinghamshire
County Council

Nottinghamshire Welfare Rights Service

Education Benefits Factsheet

Help for Families on a Low Income

July 2008

WHAT ARE EDUCATION BENEFITS?

Education Benefits are for families with children up to 19, who are at school, sixth form colleges or further education colleges. There are six types of Education benefits:-

- Free school meals and milk
- School clothing allowance
- Help with travel to school or college
- Education Maintenance Allowance
- Notts County Council Assistance
- College access and hardships funds

WHO CAN GET HELP?

It is usually the parents of the child or young person who applies for help, but where a 16-19 year old is claiming benefits in their own right or is no longer dependent on their parent(s), perhaps because they live independently, some help may be available to the students themselves. Education Maintenance Allowance is also paid directly to the young person.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND MILK

Only families receiving Income Support or income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, or Child Tax Credit without Working Tax Credit with a taxable income of below £15,575 per annum, or support provided under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, can get free school meals and milk.

Parents need to complete application form **FSM.1** from their local Education Office or County Contact Point. Evidence of receipt of benefit must be produced with the application. If you are already getting an Education benefit for another child a separate claim does not need to be made. Families who qualify will receive an authorisation letter saying they are entitled to help; a copy is sent to the school. Free school meals can normally be claimed up to the age of 19 if the young person continues their education in a school sixth form.

Free school milk is available to all children aged 7 or under whose families meet the above criteria. If your child attends a special school this age limit does not apply and free school milk can be claimed for as long as your child attends school.

SCHOOL CLOTHING ALLOWANCES

This is payable to families whose children are transferring from primary to secondary school. To be eligible parent(s) or carers must be in receipt of Income Support or Income based Job seeker's Allowance or Child Tax Credit without Working Tax Credit with a taxable income of below £15,575 per annum. Families who are provided with support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act can also qualify for a school clothing allowance at times other than the transfer from primary to secondary school. Applications should be made on form **FSM1** (or **APS2** in cases where the free school meals are provided at an out of county school and the school clothing allowance is provided by the County Council as this is the home address).

Community
Legal Service



Specialist Help

The Allowance is paid at the point when a school uniform is usually required for the first time, when the pupil begins secondary school. Pupils do not have to attend a school that requires a uniform to be worn in order to qualify for the Allowance. This year's allowance is £35.

WHERE TO APPLY FOR HELP

For further details and the application forms contact your local County Contact Point or Education Office (see below for where the offices are located) or your school.

County Contact Points open normal office hours Monday to Friday:

- Idlewells Centre, Sutton-in-Ashfield – 01623 476800 9am to 5pm
- Queens Buildings, Potter Street, Worksop – Drop in
- 17b The Square, Retford – 01777 713800 9am to 5pm
- Regent Street, Mansfield – 01623 476800 9am to 5pm
- Civic Centre, Arnold – Drop in
- Netherfield Access Centre, St. George's Centre, Victoria Road – Drop in (An outreach service on Tuesday mornings 9.30am to 12.30pm)
- Rufford Visitors Information Point, Rufford Country Park, Ollerton (Opening hours 10.30 a.m. to 4.30pm)

Oliver Quibell Infant School, Bowbridge Road, Newark

Drop-in – Monday to Friday, 9am to 3pm (term time only)

Dukeries Complex, Dukeries Campus, Whinney Lane, Ollerton

Drop-in – Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 7.30pm (Main Reception)

Meden School (Reception), Burns Lane, Warsop

Drop-in – Monday to Thursday, 8am to 4pm; Friday 8am to 3.30pm

Social Services Office, Balderton Gate, Newark

Tel: 01636 687300 – Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 12 noon

South Base, Sir John Robinson Way, Arnold

Tel: (0115) 8546161 – Open normal office hours Monday to Friday

For information outside of the opening times you may access the website at www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk or telephone the advice line 08449 80 80 80 (Minicom: 01623 436657) lines are open from 8am, Monday to Friday and 8am to 12 noon Saturday

EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is a weekly payment of £10, £20 or £30 for eligible students who are continuing in education. The weekly payments depend on household income and are made direct to the students' bank account. There are also bonus payments of £100 for meeting set targets.

- If you are in year 11 you should be given an application pack for 2008/2009 at school.
- If you are in year 12 (or year 13 in an EMA Pilot Area) and want to apply for your 2nd (or 3rd) year of EMA they will contact you directly by letter in March 2008.
- Students need to be doing at least 12 hours of guided learning on further education courses in school sixth forms, sixth form colleges and FE colleges.
- Students in receipt of Incapacity Benefit etc. are still entitled to EMA.
- Household income needs to be below £30,810 before tax in order to qualify.

- EMA does not affect parents' or carers' benefits and won't affect any money the student earns from a part time job.
- Call the free helpline (0800 1218989) or visit www.ema.dfes.gov.uk for a form or visit www.direct.gov.uk/ema.

For more information see the NWRS factsheet on Education Maintenance Allowance or visit the above website.

STUDENTS ATTENDING A COLLEGE

If you live in Nottinghamshire (not Nottingham City) and:

- you attend a Sixth Form (including City schools, Independent schools and Djanogly City Academy) full or part-time
- you are over 16 and under 19 on the first day of the academic year i.e. 01/09/2008
- you receive an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

You may be able to apply for assistance for the following:

Item/Circumstance	Assistance Available	How to Apply
University interviews	Cost of attending university interviews, up to a maximum of three interviews	Form LSF1
Materials and equipment	Grant up to a maximum of £50 per year	Form LSF1

If you have been refused EMA:

Item/Circumstance	Assistance Available	How to Apply
Unforeseen and unexpected fall of at least 15% in family financial circumstances	Weekly grant up to £30 per week with effect from change of circumstances	Form LSF2

For further details and application forms contact Parent & Pupil Services on 0115 8546161.

STUDENTS ATTENDING A COLLEGE

Students struggling financially to begin, or continue studying after the age of 16, may be able to get help from college hardship funds. It may also be possible to get help from education trusts and charities that make awards to individual students. Funds are limited but it is worth asking to see what is available.

For further advice about funding your studies at college after 16 contact the colleges Student Services. Local Connexions or website www.cnxnotts.co.uk can also give advice, or the **Learn Direct helpline** on 0800 100 900 can be contacted. This helpline gives advice on getting financial help and can provide other information about studying and career opportunities.

HELP WITH TRAVEL COSTS TO SCHOOL OR COLLEGE

PUPILS UNDER 16

Help you receive will depend on the walking distance between your home and the school your child attends. From September 2008:

- Pupils under 8 who have to walk over 2 miles to school will receive free travel
- Pupils under 8 who have to walk under 2 miles to school may be offered assisted travel
- Pupils over 8 who have to travel 3 miles or more will receive free travel until they are 16

- Pupils over 8 who have to travel under 3 miles may be offered assisted travel
- Pupils aged under 11 who are eligible for free school meals or whose parents are in receipt of maximum working tax credit, if over 2 miles, will receive free travel
- Pupils aged 11-16 who are eligible for free school meals or whose parents are entitled to maximum working tax credit are entitled to free home to school transport if they attend one of the three nearest qualifying schools (catchment or preferred) which are sited between 2-6 miles from their home address
- Pupils with special educational needs, medical or physical transport needs can apply to the Special Transport Scheme for assistance.

For further details contact: 08449 808080 or www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/buses

PUPILS/STUDENTS OVER 16

Pupils attending sixth form at school may be able to purchase a half-fare Student Travel Pass depending on your circumstances and the distance from your school.

Students at colleges of further education or sixth-form colleges on full time courses may be able to get a half-fare Student Travel Pass to help with the cost of daily journeys, Monday-Friday, between home and college. There is a cost of £99, paid in installments, to join this scheme. **Otherwise there is a season pass available for which a quote can be given on application PSE1 only.**

Application form PSE1 and further details are available from your college. You can also get forms from: Environment, Public Transport, Trent Bridge House, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 6BJ. If you prefer you can also download a form at www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/buses

If you have a disability, extra help with travel costs may be available. Contact Nottinghamshire County Council on 0115 977 3310 for *college* students with special transport needs or (0115) 977 3323 / 3572 / 3779 (Minicom 0115 977 3323) for school based students.

For any travel scheme information telephone 08449 808080.

WHERE TO GET FURTHER HELP AND ADVICE

Nottinghamshire County Council Welfare Rights Service (NWRS) provides advice on benefits to the public throughout the County. If you have any queries about Education Benefits, or any other social security benefits please telephone NWRS on (0115) 977 4018 Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm, to find out where your local advice centre is located. You can also visit our website at www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/benefitsadvice or contact us by e-mail at welfare.rights@nottsc.gov.uk There are also a number of independent advice agencies who will be able to assist you.



Contacting us

email welfare.rights@nottsc.gov.uk
 phone **0115 977 4018**
 fax **0115 977 4597**
 post **Nottinghamshire Welfare Rights Service,
 County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7QP**
 internet www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/benefitsadvice
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