



Nottinghamshire  
County Council

# Nottinghamshire Welfare Rights Service

## Education Benefits Factsheet

### Help for Families on a Low Income

July 2009

#### 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
- Education Maintenance Allowance
- School Sixth Form Learner Support Fund
- College access and hardship funds
- Help with travel to school or college

#### WHO CAN GET HELP?

It is usually the parents or carer of the child or young person who apply 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. (See below for further details).

#### FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND MILK

**Only families receiving Income Support; income-based Jobseeker's Allowance; income related Employment Support Allowance; Child Tax Credit (without Working Tax Credit) and with a taxable income of below £16,040 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 school or County Contact Point. Evidence of receipt of benefit must be produced with the application. If you are already getting free school meals for another child attending a Nottinghamshire school a separate claim does not need to be made, the child can be added to the existing claim. 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. Pupils aged over 16 years may be receiving income-related Employment Support Allowance and should apply for free school meals in their own right.

#### 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 income related Employment Support Allowance or Child Tax Credit without Working Tax Credit with a taxable income of below £16,040 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. Parent(s) who already have a free school meals claim will automatically receive an application if they have a child who will be eligible. (An **APS2** form should be completed in cases where the free school meals are provided at an out of county school but 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. Last year's allowance was £35.

## WHERE TO APPLY FOR HELP

For further details and the application forms contact your local County Contact Point 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 10.30am 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

For information outside of the opening times you may access the website at  
[www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk](http://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

An 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 the following school year.
- If you are in year 12 or year 13 and want to apply for your 2nd or 3rd year of EMA they will contact you directly by letter between April and July 2009.
- 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 or Employment and Support Allowance 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](http://www.ema.dfes.gov.uk) for a form or visit [www.direct.gov.uk/ema](http://www.direct.gov.uk/ema).

For more information on Education Maintenance Allowance, visit the above website.

## SCHOOL SIXTH FORM LEARNER SUPPORT FUND

If you live in Nottinghamshire or 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. 01/09/2009
- you receive an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

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

If you have been refused EMA:

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

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

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

## COLLEGE ACCESS AND HARDSHIP FUNDS

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](http://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

Pupils of statutory school age (5 - 16) may be eligible for free travel provided they fulfil certain criteria. Applications can be made on-line on our website, or by application form TA1 found inside an under 16 travel assistance booklet. [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/buses](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/buses)

Assistance depends on the walking distance between your home and the school your child attends, and whether it is the catchment school for your home address, or a preferred school. Extra help is available for low income families whose child is eligible for free school meals, or whose parent is in receipt of the maximum level of working tax credit, subject to certain conditions.

Travel assistance is not usually available for pupils who live less than 2 miles from the school they

attend, unless they have a special transport need.

For more details see our website on: [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/buses](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/buses) or obtain an under 16 travel assistance booklet from your school, or telephone 08449 80 80 80. Alternatively write to Nottinghamshire Transport Services, Trent Bridge House, Fox Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 6BJ.

### STUDENTS OVER 16

Students who are Nottinghamshire County residents may apply to join the Post 16 travel scheme by completing application form PSE1.

Depending on the school or college you are attending you will be offered either a half-fare travel pass for a £99 fee

OR

a quote for a Season Pass.

Where no public services are available, or if the establishment attended is out of county a grant of up to £150 per annum may be offered.

For more details see our website on: [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/buses](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/buses) or obtain a post 16 travel assistance booklet from your school/college, or telephone 08449 80 80 80. Alternatively write to Nottinghamshire Transport Services, Trent Bridge House, Fox Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 6BJ.

## 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](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/benefitsadvice) or contact us by e-mail at [welfare.rights@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/benefitsadvice)  
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