

Section 7

General Information

You have a legal duty to make sure that your child is educated. It is your responsibility to make sure that your child attends school. If your child is not at school you may be contacted to find out why. If your child is ill and not able to go to school you need to let the school know straight away.

Holidays during school time

Family holidays and days out should be taken during school holidays. Only in exceptional circumstances will holidays or days off in school time be allowed. You will need to get the Headteacher and/or Chair of Governors agreement to this first.

Education Welfare Service

The Education Welfare Service is there to help parents and children if they are having problems at school or home.

- They check up on non attendance at school and may telephone or visit you and your child to find out why they are not in school
- They can offer advice and support on a number of things; such as, exclusions, bullying, attendance, truancy, drug abuse, bereavement and a wide range of other home and/or school difficulties

You can contact them either through school or on telephone numbers 01924 307451 or 01924 307413.

Children who take part in performance or modelling.

Children may take part in a 'licensed performance'. Again you need to notify the Council and apply for a licence. The Council decides whether to approve your application or not. This is to make sure that your child is working in a safe environment for them. For further information and advice with regard to any of these please contact the Education Welfare Service Child Employment Officer on 01924 307449. More information is available on the Council's website: www.wakefield.gov.uk.

Sporting events

Children and Young People enjoy taking part in sport. Sport enhances health and well-being and builds confidence. Most children and young people take part in sport as a hobby in their own time, however, some children excel in their chosen sport and may then be selected to participate

- in regional or national events. Sports events whereby a child or young person is paid to participate or that require absence from school are regulated by national legislation. (The Children Protection at Work Regulations 1998) they will need a Sports Licence to partake in the activity. Licences can be obtained from the Education Welfare Service.

For further information and advice with regard to any of these please contact the Education Welfare Service Child Employment Officer on 01924 307449. More information available on the Council's website: www.wakefield.gov.uk.

Free School Meals

Your child/children can have free school meals if you receive;

- Income support; or
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance (JSAIB); or
- Child Tax Credit without Working Tax Credit and your annual income is less than £16190 (as assessed by the Inland Revenue as at 5 April 2011), or
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit, or
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999; or
- Employment Support Allowance (income related)

Your child must be in school full time to receive free school meals.

Children who go to Nursery Schools, Independent Schools or post 16 Colleges are not entitled to free school meals.

Applying for Free School Meals

You need to fill an application form in each year. You can get a form from school or the Council's Free School Meals Team and once you have filled this in you need to send your form back with proof of your benefit or income to:

Family Services

Free School Meals Team

Room 60, County Hall

Wakefield, WF1 2QL

Tel. No. 01924 305061

Fax: 01924 305611 or

Email: hst@wakefield.gov.uk

- If it is your first application for free school meals you will not need to send proof of your benefits (unless we ask you to do so). We check this with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) , Home Office or HMRC (Revenues and Customs)

For renewing free school meals applications we will need to see the following:

- If you receive Child Tax Credit, you must send your most recent Tax Credit Award Notice and proof of your income;
- If you receive the 'Guaranteed' element of State Pension Credit, we may need your 'Pension Credit M100' award notice.

We will write out to you to let you know whether your application has been approved or not. We will also write to the school to let them know.

- Your child will normally start having free school meals from the date we receive your application form. Unless you can prove to us that there are exceptional circumstances to your case, we will not backdate your child's entitlement. You will have to make your request in writing. Make sure you get your form back to us quickly.
- Free school meals are given for twelve months. You will need to re-apply each year. If at any time your situation changes you must tell us immediately.
- In order to process claims more quickly, we have three separate times for parents to re-apply. This depends on your surname:

Surnames A - F Easter to Easter
Surnames G - O September to July
Surnames P - Z January to December

We will send you a form towards the end of the twelve months. If you still want free school meals you must fill this in and return to us or the meals will stop.

If things change

You must tell us straight away. It is illegal for your child to have free school meals if you do not qualify and will be asked to repay the cost of meals taken while you were not entitled to free school meals.

School trips

- If your child has free school meals, the school should provide your child with a packed lunch.

Families Information Service (FIS)

They provide free detailed, accurate, up to date information on a wide range of local services and support for parents of children and young people up to 20 years old.

They can provide information, guidance and advice on:

- Parenting
- Family learning
- Financial support for families including Working Tax Credits
- Childcare
- Services and support for disabled children and young people
- Physical and mental health,
- Sports, play and recreational opportunities,
- Activities and support for young people and much more.

They also work with organisations and professionals who support children, young people and their families.

The Choice Advice Service and Parent Partnership Service are also based with the Families Information Service.

Call us on: 0800 587 8042

E-mail fis@wakefield.gov.uk

Visit our website www.wakefieldfis.org.uk

Text 07624 809247

Safeguarding Children

If at any time you are worried or concerned about the welfare of a child please contact Social Care Direct.

They are open 7 days a week, 24 hours.

Callers to Social Care Direct can remain anonymous. You do not have to give them your name if you do not want to.

Social Care Direct

Telephone: 0845 8 503 503

Fax: 01924 303455

Email: social_care_direct@wakefield.gov.uk

Social Care Direct are your first point of contact for social care services.