

South Gloucestershire *Council*

Free School Meals Guidance:

Completing an online application for Free School Meals via the Citizen Portal



Free School Meals Guidance

Last Updated: 10/01/2017 - Review Date 10/10/2018

To apply online please visit our website: www.southglos.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals

This guidance has been created to help guide you through completing an online application for **Free School Meals** via the South Gloucestershire Citizen Portal.

The Citizen Portal is used by parents to apply online for a range of different services including Free School Meals, Early Years Childcare Funding and applying for school places. In this document we will be addressing how a parent can apply for their child to receive Free School Meals.

To make an online application you will need a valid email address in order to complete the registration process and to receive confirmation of your application.

If you have any questions, please contact the '**Children and Young People Information Service**' on **01454 868008** or email cis@southglos.gov.uk

Keep an eye out for these handy 'tip' boxes found throughout the guidance

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Who qualifies for free school meals?

Under current rules and at the time of writing this guidance, your child might be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get Free School Meals.

Your child might also get Free School Meals if you get any of these benefits and your child is both:

- Younger than the [compulsory age for starting school](#)
- In full-time education

Infant Free School Meals

Your child will be able to get free school meals if they're in:

- Reception class
- Year 1
- Year 2

This includes academies, free schools, pupil referral units and alternative provision as well as maintained schools. You do not need to apply for free school meals if your child meets the above criteria, however if you are on a low income you should still apply so that your child's school can claim the Pupil Premium.

Pupil Premium is extra money paid direct to schools for each child who is eligible for free school meals due to the household being on a low income. It is used to support your child's education.

How do I apply for free school meals?

You can apply online via the Citizen Portal using the below link:

https://oneb2b.southglos.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/

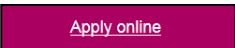

We will then check your eligibility and let you know whether you qualify for Free School Meals.

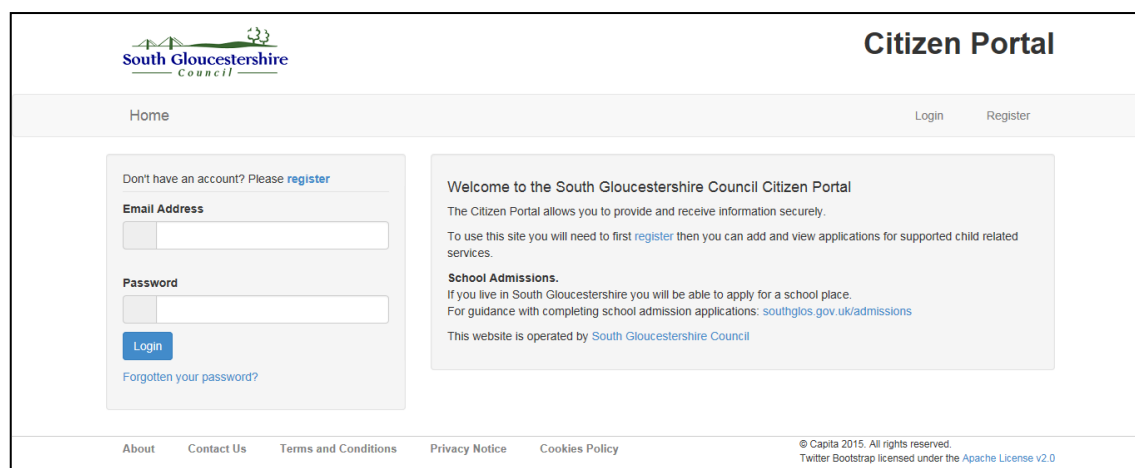
If you have already completed a primary/secondary school place application for the 2017/18 academic year via the Citizen Portal, you do not need to re-register when applying for free school meals. Please use the login details that you have already set up.

Setting up/Registering an Account

If you have already completed a primary/secondary school place application for the 2017/18 academic year via the Citizen Portal, you do not need to re-register when applying for free school meals. Please use the login details that you have already set up.

If you haven't already done so, before you can apply for Free School Meals you will need to register with a valid email address to our Citizen Portal. Follow the below steps to do this:

- Go to the school admissions website: www.southglos.gov.uk
- Click: 
- Select 'Free School Meals' from the list you are given
- Details on who qualifies for Free School Meals are given here. If you do not meet the criteria then you will not be able to claim Free School Meals
- Further down this page, select: 
- The page below will open:



The screenshot shows the Citizen Portal interface. At the top left is the South Gloucestershire Council logo. To the right is the text 'Citizen Portal'. Below the logo is a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Login', and 'Register'. The main content area is split into two columns. The left column contains a login form with the text 'Don't have an account? Please [register](#)', an 'Email Address' field, a 'Password' field, a 'Login' button, and a link 'Forgotten your password?'. The right column contains a welcome message: 'Welcome to the South Gloucestershire Council Citizen Portal. The Citizen Portal allows you to provide and receive information securely. To use this site you will need to first [register](#) then you can add and view applications for supported child related services. **School Admissions.** If you live in South Gloucestershire you will be able to apply for a school place. For guidance with completing school admission applications: southglos.gov.uk/admissions. This website is operated by South Gloucestershire Council'. At the bottom, there is a footer with links for 'About', 'Contact Us', 'Terms and Conditions', 'Privacy Notice', and 'Cookies Policy', along with copyright information: '© Capita 2015. All rights reserved. Twitter Bootstrap licensed under the Apache License v2.0'.

- If you have previously registered with our Citizen Portal enter the **'Email Address'** you used to register and your **'Password'** and click **'Login'**
- If you are new to our Citizen Portal website and creating an account for the first time or need to re-register with a new email address click **'Register'** where it says 'Don't have an account? Please **'Register'**
- This will open the **'Registration'** screen. Enter your details on this **'Security Details'** tab. Fields marked with an ***** are required fields:

- Enter your **'Email Address'** and input the same address into **'Confirm Email Address'**
- Enter your chosen **'Password'** and enter the same password into **'Confirm Password'**

Passwords must be a minimum of 8 characters, no longer than 15 characters and must contain a minimum of 2 number(s). Remember that your password is case sensitive.

- Select your **'Secret Question'** from the drop down menu
- Type in the answer to your **'Secret Question'** into the **'Secret Answer'** box
- Click **'Next'**

Home Login Register

Registration

You need to first register with us in order to apply for Free School Meals, Transport or for a School Place for your child(ren). This screen will guide you to enter the necessary information required for registration process. Please hover the mouse over each field to see what information you will need to enter for this purpose.

Security Details **About you** Contact Details

Title *

Forename *

Surname *

Gender *

* Required field

- This will open the **'About You'** tab. Fields marked with an ***** are required fields
- Select your **'Title'** from the drop down menu
- Enter your **'Forename'** and **'Surname'**
- Select your **'Gender'**
- Click **'Next'** or you can click **'Previous'** to return to the previous screen

Security Details About you **Contact Details**

To find your home address please enter your postcode and then click Find Address. If you do not know your postcode, look it up [here](#). If your address is not listed, press the 'Enter Address Manually' and type the correct address in the boxes provided

Postcode *

[I don't have a Postcode](#)

Please supply a telephone number where you can be contacted during normal office hours, if necessary.

Home Phone

Mobile Number

Work Phone

* Required field

- Enter your **'Postcode'** and then click **'Find Address'** to search for your house details from the postcode you have provided
- If your address does not appear after entering the **'Postcode'** and clicking **'Find Address'** then click **'Enter Address Manually'** and enter your address details
- If you do not know your postcode then click where it says **'I don't have a Postcode'** and you can enter your address details manually
- Please provide a **'Home Phone'**, **'Mobile Number'** or **'Work Phone'**
- When you have entered all of your details click **'Submit Registration'**

An email will now be sent to the email address you have used to register with.
Please check your inbox (including any Junk/Spam folders) for an email from
'Children & Young People Information Service' – you will need to click the link in the
email to complete the registration process

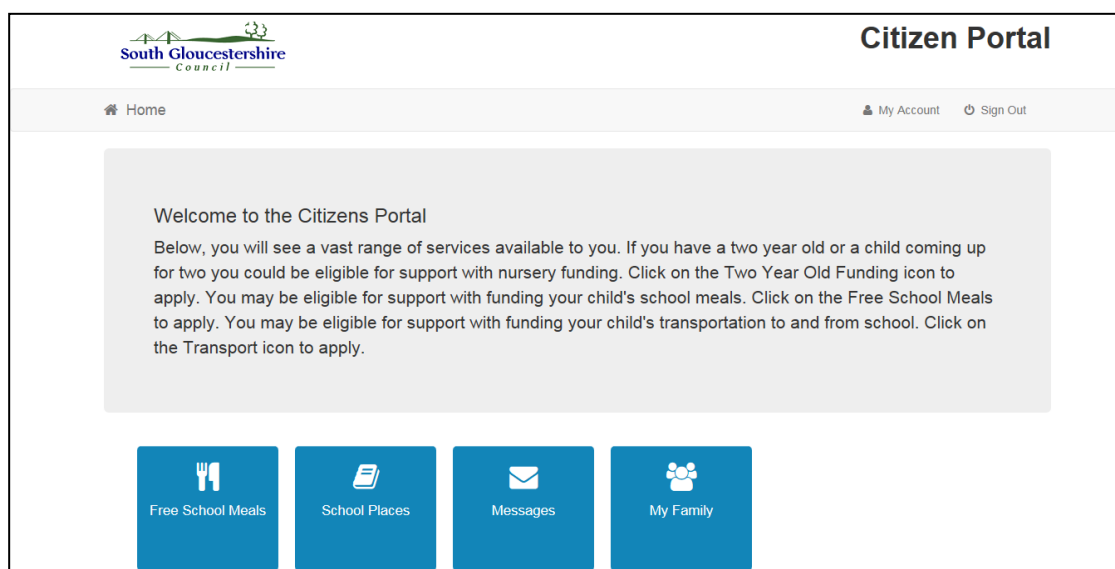
- After clicking the registration link, you will be asked to log in. Enter your **'Email Address'** and **'Password'**
- You have now completed your registration with the South Gloucestershire Citizen Portal.

Logging into the Citizen Portal

Once you have successfully registered with our Citizen Portal you will be able to login and start making an application.

This section of the guidance shows you how to login to the Citizen Portal if you have previously registered, further sections of this guidance below detail how to apply for **Free School Meals**, how to reset your password or change your email address.

- Open the citizen portal: https://oneb2b.southglos.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/
- Enter your **'Email Address'** and **'Password'** and click **'Login'**
- You will see the following screen when logging in:

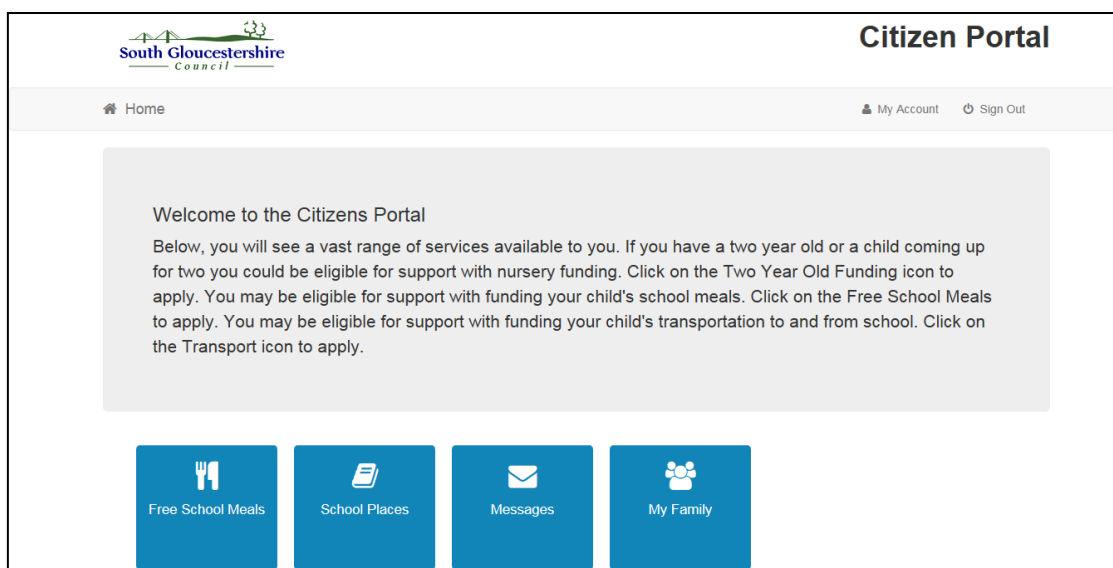



If you have forgotten your password then click **'Forgotten your Password?'** on the log in screen. Enter your email address to be sent a link regarding changing your password. For further information on changing your password please see the **'Changing your Account Password'** section later in this guidance.

Applying for Free School Meals

This section of the guidance will take you through applying for Free School Meals

- Open the Citizen Portal: https://oneb2b.southglos.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/
- Enter your '**Email Address**' and '**Password**' and click '**Login**'
- You will see the **Citizen Portal 'Home'** screen below:



- Go into '**My Family**' to check/add any child details
- '**My Family**' will show you your details along with any child details. If a child has already been added then you don't need to add them again
- If you need to add a child, click '**Add Child**' and fill out the child's details and address. Click '**Add Child**' to save the child's details, where you will now see they have been added to the '**My Family**' screen
- Click the '**Home**' button to return to the main screen and begin creating a school place application
- Click the '**Free School Meals**' icon: 
- If you have submitted other Free School Meal claims, these will appear here

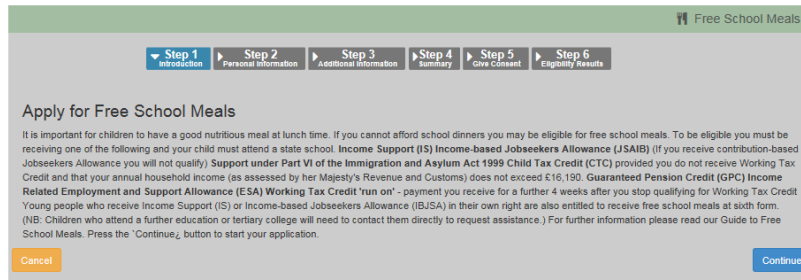
Each previous Free School Meal claim that appears will have a badge against them, which details the current status. For example:

Eligible

- Click '**Apply**' to start a new Free School Meals claim, where there are 6 steps to applying for Free School Meals

Step 1 – Introduction

- Read through the 'Apply for Free School Meals' introduction
- Click '**Continue**' to proceed



Free School Meals

Step 1 Introduction Step 2 Personal Information Step 3 Additional Information Step 4 Summary Step 5 Give Consent Step 6 Eligibility Results

Apply for Free School Meals

It is important for children to have a good nutritious meal at lunch time. If you cannot afford school dinners you may be eligible for free school meals. To be eligible you must be receiving one of the following and your child must attend a state school. **Income Support (IS)** **Income-based Jobseekers Allowance (JSAIB)** (if you receive contribution-based Jobseekers Allowance you will not qualify) **Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999** **Child Tax Credit (CTC)** provided you do not receive Working Tax Credit and that your annual household income (as assessed by her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190. **Guaranteed Pension Credit (GPC)** **Income Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)** **Working Tax Credit 'run on'** - payment you receive for a further 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit. Young people who receive Income Support (IS) or Income-based Jobseekers Allowance (IBUSA) in their own right are also entitled to receive free school meals at sixth form. (NB: Children who attend a further education or tertiary college will need to contact them directly to request assistance.) For further information please read our Guide to Free School Meals. Press the 'Continue' button to start your application.

Cancel Continue

Step 2 – Personal Information

In order to check your Free School Meal eligibility against the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) we need to know your Date of Birth, NI Number or National Asylum Support Service No along with your details.

- Enter your '**Date of Birth**'
- Enter your '**National Insurance Number**' (e.g. AB123456C)
- If applicable, enter your '**National Asylum Support Service No**' (e.g. 13 / 07 / 68789)
- Your '**Address**', '**Home Phone**', '**Mobile Number**' and '**Gender**' will appear on the right hand side. If these are not correct, click '**My Account**' in the top right hand corner of the Citizen Portal screen and amend the required details
- If you have previously applied for a Free School Meal or a School Place for your child using our Citizen Portal then the child's details at the bottom of the screen
- You can now either select an existing child to add to your Free School Meals claim or you can click '**Add Child**' to add in details about the child or children you wish to add to this Free School Meals claim

To include an existing child in this application:

- Click the 'Include in Application' slider option against each child you want to include to '**Yes**'
- Click '**Continue**'

To add a child to this application:

- Click '**Add Child**'
- Enter the child details. Fields marked with an * are required fields
- Once you have entered the child's details click '**Add Child and Continue**'

Free School Meals

✓ Step 1 Introduction
▼ Step 2 Personal Information
▶ Step 3 Additional Information
▶ Step 4 Summary
▶ Step 5 Give Consent
▶ Step 6 Eligibility Results

Personal Details

Please provide the following information. This is required by DWP to check whether you are eligible for Free School Meals.

Your current dependents details

Date of Birth *

Please enter either:

National Insurance No. (e.g. AB123456C)

OR:

National Asylum Support Service No. (e.g. 13 / 07 / 56789)

If your details are not correct, please navigate to the Contact Details section using the My Account link in the navigation bar

Address

Home Phone

Mobile Number

Gender

<p> Samwise Gamgee</p> <p>Current School Not known</p> <p>Gender Male</p> <p>Date of Birth 09-Feb-2006</p> <p>Parental Responsibility Yes</p> <p>Relationship Other Family Member</p> <p>Include in Application? <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p> Meriadoc Brandybuck</p> <p>Current School Not known</p> <p>Gender Male</p> <p>Date of Birth 18-Jul-2012</p> <p>Parental Responsibility Yes</p> <p>Relationship Other Family Member</p> <p>Include in Application? <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p> Perrigrin Took</p> <p>Current School Not known</p> <p>Gender Male</p> <p>Date of Birth 28-Aug-2012</p> <p>Parental Responsibility Yes</p> <p>Relationship Other Family Member</p> <p>Include in Application? <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
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Step 3 – Additional Information

- Step 3 will ask you a question relating to your Free School Meals claim
- Enter a date into the both ‘**When would you like your Free School Meal claim to start from?**’ Please note: **This is not a guarantee but will assist us with your application.** Also note that Free School Meal claims cannot be back dated
- Once you have entered the date, click ‘**Continue**’

Home My Account Sign Out

Free School Meals

✓ Step 1 Introduction
✓ Step 2 Personal Information
▼ Step 3 Additional Information
▶ Step 4 Summary
▶ Step 5 Give Consent
▶ Step 6 Eligibility Results

Additional Information

When would you like your Free School Meal claim to start from? (This is not a guarantee but will assist us with your application)

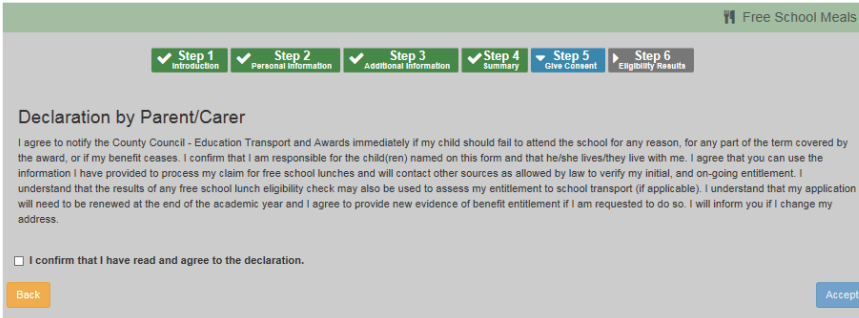
Back Continue

Step 4 – Summary

- On the Step 4 – Summary screen you will be given a summary of your Free School Meals claim, which will detail the **‘Claimant Details’** and the **‘Children’** who you have included in the claim, along with the **‘Additional Information’**
- Click **‘Continue’** to proceed. If you do need to make amend any details, click **‘Back’** if required

Step 5 – Give Consent

- You must read the **‘Declaration by the Parent/Carer’** statement
- Once you have read the statement, tick the **‘I confirm that I have read and agree to the declaration’** option
- Click **‘Accept’**



The screenshot shows a progress bar at the top with six steps: Step 1 Introduction, Step 2 Personal Information, Step 3 Additional Information, Step 4 Summary, Step 5 Give Consent (highlighted in blue), and Step 6 Eligibility Results. Below the progress bar is the heading 'Declaration by Parent/Carer' followed by a paragraph of text: 'I agree to notify the County Council - Education Transport and Awards immediately if my child should fail to attend the school for any reason, for any part of the term covered by the award, or if my benefit ceases. I confirm that I am responsible for the child(ren) named on this form and that he/she lives/they live with me. I agree that you can use the information I have provided to process my claim for free school lunches and will contact other sources as allowed by law to verify my initial, and on-going entitlement. I understand that the results of any free school lunch eligibility check may also be used to assess my entitlement to school transport (if applicable). I understand that my application will need to be renewed at the end of the academic year and I agree to provide new evidence of benefit entitlement if I am requested to do so. I will inform you if I change my address.' Below the text is a checkbox with the label 'I confirm that I have read and agree to the declaration.' At the bottom left is an orange 'Back' button and at the bottom right is a blue 'Accept' button.

Step 6 – Eligibility Results

- Using the information you have entered throughout your application, we will check with the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) to see if you are eligible to claim for free school meals or not
- Please read the on screen details to determine what to do next if required

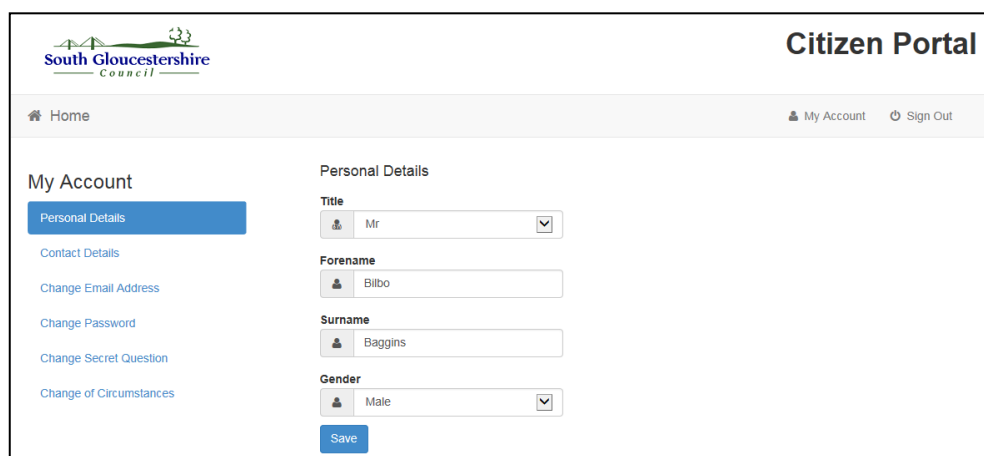
You will receive an **‘Application Reference’** number, which can be used with any enquiries, please store the application reference safe. If you have further enquiries about your application please quote this application reference.

- Click **‘Finish’**

If you have any further enquiries about your application or would like to take any further action please contact us on: **01454 868008** quoting your **‘application reference’**

Changing your Details

You are able to change your personal details by logging into the Citizen Portal and selecting '**My Account**' in the top right hand corner:



The screenshot shows the 'Citizen Portal' interface for South Gloucestershire Council. The 'My Account' menu is on the left, with 'Personal Details' selected. The 'Personal Details' form on the right includes fields for Title (Mr), Forename (Bilbo), Surname (Baggins), and Gender (Male), with a 'Save' button at the bottom.

Personal Details

After logging into the Citizen Portal, within '**My Account**' > '**Personal Details**' you can view/amend your: **Title**, **Forename**, **Surname** and **Gender** here. Click '**Save**' when you have made any amendments.

Contact Details

After logging into the Citizen Portal, within '**My Account**' > '**Contact Details**' you can view/amend your: **address details** and **telephone numbers** on this screen. Click '**Save**' when you have made any amendments.

Change Email Address

After logging into the Citizen Portal, within '**My Account**' > '**Change Email Address**' you can view/amend your: **Email Address** and **Password** here. Click '**Submit**' when you have made any amendments.

Change Password

After logging into the Citizen Portal, within '**My Account**' > '**Change Password**' you can view/amend your Citizen Portal **Password**. Click '**Submit**' when you have made any amendments.

Passwords must be a minimum of 8 characters, no longer than 15 characters and must contain a minimum of 2 number(s). Remember that your password is case sensitive.

Change Secret Question

After logging into the Citizen Portal, within **'My Account' > 'Change Secret Question'** you can view/amend your Citizen Portal **Secret Question**. Click **'Submit'** when you have made any amendments.

Change of Circumstances

See the details on the Citizen Portal screen regarding a change of circumstance.

Help/Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Lost/forgotten password

If you need to retrieve your password, click the **'Forgotten your password'** link on the Citizen Portal log in screen. You will be asked to enter the e-mail address and the answer to your **'Secret Question'** entered during your registration. Your password will be emailed to this email address.

You can also change your password after logging in within the **'My Account' > 'Change password'** menu

Q: I need some help with my application

If you have any questions, please contact the **'Children and Young People Information Service'** on **01454 868008** or email: cis@southglos.gov.uk

Q: What happens after I have completed my application?

- We will check your eligibility for free school meals
- If you qualify for free school meals under the benefit criteria, an email will be sent to you confirming your free school meal entitlement
- Your child or children's school will also be informed
- Contact your child's school to find out how your child's lunch will be served
- Free school meals cannot be granted to any child until either the school or ourselves have received a correctly completed application
- Entitlement to free school meals cannot be backdated
- Schools will know if your child qualifies for a universal Infants free school meal

Q: What happens if my circumstances change?

If you are claiming free school meals due to receiving a qualifying benefit, or having a low income, you must inform us immediately if your circumstances change. If you stop receiving one of the benefits listed above you will need to inform us because your entitlement to free school meals will stop.

Giving false information or failing to disclose a change in circumstances may lead to legal proceedings.

Q: What do I do to maintain my claim for free school meals?

Your claim for free school meals will be reviewed on a regular basis. We use an online free school meals eligibility checking system provided by the Department for Education to confirm your entitlement.

Please note the online checking system only confirms or denies your eligibility to claim free school meals: it does not give us any other information. If we cannot confirm your entitlement through this process we will contact you to ask you to provide up-to-date evidence of the benefit you receive.

Q: Will I need to re-apply if my child changes school?

Your child remains entitled to free school meals as long as you are eligible. Free school meal entitlement will automatically follow your child to the next stage of their education (i.e., in September) and the new school will be advised of this.