

Home Access Grant: Eligibility criteria

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What is Home Access?

Home Access is the government programme which will help to ensure that more children in state-maintained education in England have access to technology at home to support learning. The programme was developed out of the recognition that there are still a significant number of learners who lack access to a computer and the internet at home. Additional support for learners with assistive technology needs will be provided so that all children are able to benefit from the programme.

Following on from a successful pilot of the programme in Oldham and Suffolk local authorities, Home Access will be rolled out across England from December 2009. The programme aims to provide funding to over 270,000 households by March 2011. Please see www.becta.org.uk/homeaccess for more information.

To be eligible for a Home Access Grant, families must meet all of the criteria below:

Are you a parent or guardian responsible for and living with a child;

- in years 3 to 9
- who attends a state school in England full time¹
- who did not get a computer from Computers For Pupils or the Home Access programme in the past

Do you receive at least one of the following?

- Free School Meals for your child²
- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (but not Working Tax Credit) and an income of less than £16,040 per year
- Guaranteed Pension Credit
- Income Related Employment Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act

¹ Or whose place is paid for by their local authority or the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). Home schooled children do not qualify.

² Children receiving Free School Meals for longer than four weeks under the national rules may be eligible for a Home Access Grant. However, children receiving Free School Meals as parts of the pilots in Durham, Newham and Wolverhampton (and elsewhere) will not be eligible for a Home Access Grant unless they also meet the national criteria for receiving Free School Meals.

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The application process

Applications can only be made by the legal parent/guardian of the learner and they must reside at the same address. The applicant must also be a UK resident and the recipient of Child Benefit for the learner they are applying for. All applicants will have to send in their Child Benefit Award letter with their application form. Applicants whose child is registered for Free School Meals should not have to submit any additional evidence; however, applicants applying under one of the other criteria will have to provide proof. Acceptable proof will be detailed in the application form.

Please note: these criteria are subject to change in line with the national criteria for Free School Meals which is updated annually, usually in April. The eligibility criteria will change in April 2010 in line with the recent pre-Budget announcement Local Authority support and engagement .

Looked After Children

Applications for Looked After Children will be made by the local authority and validated by the foster parent or the Looked After Child themselves if they are over 16. The age range for Looked After Children spans school years 1 to 13. Looked After Children must not have been provided with a similar service before in order to be eligible. Children who are in local-authority run care homes will not be eligible.

Assistive technology

Assistive Technology software will be included on all Home Access packages and will address a substantial proportion of additional learner needs, for example those around communication and literacy. If a learner requires additional hardware – adapted keyboards, mice and/or keyboard stickers – then they would indicate and self-certify this need on the application form. This may be subject to checks.

Learners who have a need that exceeds the hardware offering (known as Assistive Technology Package 1) can apply for additional support for Assistive Technology Package 2. This is an individualised Assistive Technology provision that is agreed with applicants following an individual evaluation of their learner's needs.

To qualify for Assistive Technology Package 2 applicants must first self-certify that the Assistive Technology Package 1 is insufficient to meet the learner's needs and also have a current Statement of Special Educational Need, be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance in the name of the learner or have authorised confirmation of the need for Assistive Technology Package 2 from the Special Educational Needs Coordinator at the learner's school or a local authority representative.

Home Access Grant helpline:

Tel: 0333 200 1004

Minicom: 0121 748 1471

Want to support the programme?



www.homeaccess.org.uk

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