

## Important Changes to Free School Meals from September 2026

We are writing to inform you of significant changes to free school meals (FSM) and pupil premium eligibility that will come into effect from **1 September 2026**.

### What's Changing?

From September 2026, all pupils from households receiving Universal Credit will be eligible for free school meals, regardless of their household's annual income. Previously, only pupils from households who received Universal Credit and had a yearly income of £7,400 or less were eligible.

This means there will now be two categories of benefits-based free school meals:

- **Targeted FSM:** For pupils in households receiving Universal Credit with an annual income of £7,400 or less
- **Expanded FSM:** For pupils who do not qualify for targeted FSM, but whose households receive Universal Credit

**From the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year, transitional protections for free school meals will end. Households must meet the new FSM eligibility criteria from the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year to continue receiving provision.**

### Will this change affect Pupil Premium Funding?

Yes – newly eligible FSM pupils will NOT automatically attract pupil premium funding unless their earned income falls below the £7400 threshold.

Protected pupils will still attract pupil premium for up to 6 years under the existing 'FSM6' rule.

### Do I need to reapply if my child already receives free school meals?

Yes – all families, including currently protected Free School Meals families must reapply in Summer 2026 to received free school meals from September 2026 onwards.

### What You Need to Do

**Please complete the form in the link below by Friday 10 July 2026.**

[FREE SCHOOL MEALS APPLICATION FORM - JUNE 2026 – Fill in form](#)

**Please note that if you do not complete this form so that we can recheck your position, your child may lose their entitlement to free school meals when the new school year starts in September.**

**We will check your eligibility using the Department for Education's eligibility checking system. You will be notified of the outcome as soon as possible.**

**You only need to complete this form once. Subsequent rechecks of your eligibility will be carried out annually to assess whether you continue to be eligible for free school meals.**

**Please contact Mrs Croysdill in the Finance Office if you have any questions about the application process.**