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17 June 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

Upcoming changes to Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility from 1 September 2026

From September 2026, the eligibility criteria for Free School Meals will change. All households receiving Universal Credit will be included, but eligibility will be divided into two groups:

Targeted Free School Meals

For households receiving Universal Credit with an annual income below £7,400.

Expanded Free School Meals

For households receiving Universal Credit with an annual income above £7,400.

What steps you need to take now

If your child already receives Free School Meals and you have applied through the Hampshire portal, you do not need to do anything. If you think your child may now be eligible, please apply via the Hampshire portal:

[Free school meals for pupils up to 16 years old | Education and learning | Hampshire County Council](#)

Children eligible under the expanded criteria will only begin to receive Free School Meals from September 2026.

If you disagree with a decision

If you have applied and believe the decision is incorrect, please contact reception.

Reception and Key Stage 1 parents

All children in Early Years Foundation Stage or Key Stage 1 already receive free meals under the Universal Infant Free School Meals scheme. However, we still encourage you to apply.

This is because schools receive Pupil Premium funding for children who qualify under Targeted Free School Meal eligibility. This funding helps support your child during their time at school.



Success for All through Attainment, Resilience and Autonomy

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Transitional Protections (until August 2026)

Transitional protections have been in place since 1 April 2018 and will continue until the end of term.

During this time:

- Any child who becomes eligible for benefits based Free School Meals will continue to receive them until July 2026.
- This will not change even if household income increases.

From September 2026, these protections will end. From this point, all families must meet the new eligibility rules for their child to receive Free School Meals.

If you have any questions about these changes, please contact reception.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Perkins", with a small dot at the end.

Sarah Perkins
Bursar