



Brook Field Primary School

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Dear Parent/Carer

Changes to Free School Meals (from September 2026)

We are writing to inform you about important national changes to Free School Meals (FSM) that will take effect from September 2026. These changes may affect your child's eligibility, either now or in the future.

What is changing?

From September 2026 all children in households receiving Universal Credit will be eligible for free school meals, regardless of income. This means many more families will be able to access free school meals.

Children will be checked against 2 categories:

Targeted	Expanded
If you meet the current eligibility criteria: • your child will receive free school meals • your child will receive Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) vouchers • your child's school will receive pupil premium funding	If you receive Universal Credit, regardless of income: • your child will receive free school meals

End of current protections

At present, once a child qualifies for free school meals, they usually keep that entitlement even if family circumstances change, this is called Transitional Protection. This protection will continue until the end of the 2025/26 school year. From September 2026, eligibility will be based on your current circumstances. This means some children may gain or lose eligibility depending on changes to household income or benefits.

Important: You still need to apply!

Even if you receive Universal Credit free school meals are not automatically given. You must still apply. If you think your child may be eligible, we strongly encourage you to apply.

If your child is currently eligible for free school meals and you want these to continue in September you must reapply to check that you are still eligible. No-one will automatically be eligible in September.

"Celebrating all our steps to success"



Universal Free School Meals:

- Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will automatically receive a universal free school meal regardless of the family income.
- However, families with children in these year groups should make an application for benefits-based free school meals if they meet the criteria listed above. If you are eligible for targeted free school meals, additional funding is available to the school.

These changes are designed to help more families access free school meals. We encourage all parents who may be eligible to apply and ensure they receive the support available. Please contact the school should you wish to discuss this confidentially.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Taylor