

Thursday 16th July 2026

Dear Parents /Carers,

Important Updates to Free School Meals for the Next Academic Year (2026/2027)

As you know, every child at our infant and junior school currently enjoys a nutritious, free school meal every day. This has been made possible through the Universal Infant Free School Meal scheme for our younger children (Reception to Year 2) and the Mayor of London's Primary Meals Grant for our Key Stage 2 pupils (Years 3 to 6).

We are writing to let you know about a significant nationwide change to how free school meals are funded and managed by the government, starting this September.

What is changing?

The Government has introduced a new system under the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026. Going forward, all families who receive Universal Credit are now legally entitled to free school meals, regardless of their household income, and this will be funded under a separate grant to both Universal Infant Free School Meals and the Mayor's Primary Meals Grant. To manage this, the government has split benefits-based funding into two new categories:

Targeted FSM: This is for households on Universal Credit with an annual net earned income of £7,400 or less. If your family falls into this group, your child receives their daily free meal, and our school receives vital extra funding called 'Pupil Premium'. This extra money goes directly towards support staff, learning resources and extra-curricular activities for your children.

Expanded FSM: This is a brand new category for households on Universal Credit whose annual earnings are above £7,400. If you fall into this group, your child is now fully entitled to a free school meal funded through this new national scheme, and will no longer be funded for a daily meal through either Universal Infant Free School Meals or the Mayor's Primary Meals Grant.

What you need to do next

To ensure that your child continues to receive their meals seamlessly next academic year, and to ensure our school doesn't lose out on critical funding, the government now requires us to actively check and confirm the eligibility of every family who receives Universal Credit. This includes an annual check on every family who has previously been entitled to the Pupil Premium Grant.





Applying is quick and confidential. You can check your eligibility quickly using the national [Free School Meals Eligibility Checker](#). You will need your name, date of birth and National Insurance number. If you think your child may be eligible, you can apply yourself using the link above. The result will be shared with us directly.

Past eligibility for free school meals does not guarantee eligibility from September and we will be in touch with you if this impacts you. You can also use the link above to check your current status.

Even if your child already receives a meal through the London Mayor's scheme or is in Reception/Key Stage 1, completing the eligibility check is incredibly important. It ensures your child is safely registered under the correct national framework and helps us secure every penny of funding available to support your child's education.

Thank you so much for your ongoing support and cooperation as we transition to this new system, and please contact the relevant school office if you have any questions.

Kind regards,

Helen Lockey

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