



16 June 2026

Dear Parents/Carers (Year 2 Only)

When your child moves into year 3 in September 2026, they will no longer be entitled to universal free school meals.

## **What this means**

If your child is entitled to Income Based Free School Meals, they can continue to have a school provided meal free of charge. If your child is not entitled to Income Based Free School Means, parents/carers will either need to pay for school meals or provide a packed lunch from home.

## **Income Based Free School Meals**

Starting from September 2026, the UK government is expanding benefits-related Free School Meals (FSM) in England so that all children in households receiving Universal Credit will qualify.

### ***The Two New Eligibility Categories***

The Department for Education (DfE) is splitting benefits-based free school meals into two distinct tiers:

- Targeted FSM: This applies to households on Universal Credit with an annual net earned income of £7,400 or less (or those on other legacy benefits like Income Support). These pupils continue to qualify for the meal, and their schools will receive extra funding like Pupil Premium. They also retain access to peripheral benefits like the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme.
- Expanded FSM: This is the new tier for households on Universal Credit with annual earnings exceeding £7,400. Pupils in this bracket will receive free school meals but will not trigger Pupil Premium funding or qualify for HAF holiday provisions.

## **End to "Transitional Protection"**

Since April 2018, "transitional protection" rules meant that once a child was deemed eligible for FSM, they kept that status until the end of their schooling phase, even if their family's financial situation improved.

- Protection Ends: This temporary safety net completely expires on 31 August 2026.
- Re-assessment: If you currently receive FSM via transitional protection but no longer receive Universal Credit (or another qualifying benefit), your child's free meals will stop in September 2026.

## **How Do I Claim Income Based Free School Meals**

Parents/carers must apply for free school meals through Nottinghamshire County Council, the easiest way to apply is via the Nottinghamshire County Council website. The council will notify school directly when a child is entitled to free school meals. Parents/carers will need to pay for school provided meals if their claim is unsuccessful or until their claim has been processed.

## **School Meal Payments**

From September 2026, school provided meals will cost £3.40 per day (£17 per week). All payments must be made in advance, at the latest, the Monday of the coming week. Parents/carers must pay for school meals via the school app, cash payments are not accepted.

## **What We Need Parents/Carers To Do**

Please follow the below link to let us know - starting from September 2026, if your child would like to have a school provided meal or bring a pack lunch from home. Please complete this form by Friday 26 June 2026.

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/RCnwnC9M5y>

Yours sincerely  
School Office