

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are pleased to share some positive updates regarding national changes to the Free School Meals (FSM) programme, which will come into effect from **September 2026**.

The government has broadened the eligibility criteria, meaning that a greater number of families will now qualify for free school meals. In particular, from September, all children in households receiving Universal Credit will be entitled to free school meals, regardless of overall household income.

### **What is changing?**

From September 2026, the Free School Meals programme will be structured slightly differently. For secondary-aged pupils, it will be divided into two categories:

- **Expanded Free School Meals (New):** All children whose families receive Universal Credit will now be eligible.
- **Targeted Free School Meals:** This applies to families with an earned household income below £7,400. Eligibility for this group also enables the school to receive additional funding, known as the Pupil Premium, which directly supports your child's education.

### **Why is this important now?**

- To ensure all eligible pupils are registered and able to access meals from the start of the new academic year, the government has asked schools to carry out a new eligibility check.
- **As the previous “transitional protections” end this July, all families—including those currently receiving free school meals—must be reassessed under the updated criteria.**
- Once confirmed, your child's eligibility will be secured for the entirety of the 2026/27 academic year.

### **What do families need to do?**

- We kindly ask all families who have previously received FSM, as well as those who currently receive Universal Credit (or believe they may now be eligible), to take a couple of minutes to provide the required details by completing the FSM Eligibility Form: [FSM Eligibility Form – Fill out form](#)
- **Please complete the FSM Eligibility Form by Wednesday 24th June 2026.**
- All information provided is treated in strict confidence, and children's FSM status is never publicly identified.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. Your support helps ensure that every child has access to a nutritious meal and that the school receives the appropriate funding to support all pupils.

If you have any questions or would like help completing the form, please contact the school office.

With kind regards

Little Heath School