

Dear Parent/Carer,

Subject: Changes to Free School Meals

We are writing to let you know about important changes to Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility that will take effect from September 2026.

Going forward, schools will record FSM eligibility under one of two categories:

Targeted FSM – for families receiving Universal Credit with household earnings below £7,400 per year. These pupils will receive a free school meal and are eligible for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme. The child's school will also receive Pupil Premium funding.

Expanded FSM – for families receiving Universal Credit with earnings above £7,400 per year. These pupils will be entitled to free meals only.

(Please note: ALL pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will continue to receive a free meal under the Universal Infant Free School Meal scheme.)

What this means for you

If your child currently receives FSM, their eligibility will be re-checked before the new school year. If Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) do not hold the relevant information you may be asked to provide updated information to confirm whether your child qualifies.

As re-checks are processed, if you have previously applied and LCC hold your email address, you will receive an email notifying you of updated eligibilities.

Households that no longer meet the criteria will not automatically continue to receive FSM, as previous transitional protections in place since April 2018 will end when the current school term finishes.

Next steps

If you have previously applied for Free School Meals via the LCC website and your details remain the same, you do not need to do anything else at the moment.

If you have not previously applied, even if your child is currently receiving free meals in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, please apply by visiting <https://lcc.cloud.servelec-synergy.com/SynergyWeb/PortalHome/>

Please note, once your child has their updated status this will last for a full school year. The status will only be changed if a re-check is requested by a parent/carers or school.

If your child (from Year 3 upwards) currently receives FSM, and after re-checking is not entitled to free meals from September, please ensure you have made arrangements for lunches upon their return in September.

Thank you for your attention to this important update and for your continued support.

Kind regards,

Education Support, Lincolnshire County Council