

Dear Parents/Carers,

IMPORTANT UPDATES TO FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM)

Starting 1 September 2026



EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY FROM SEPT 2026

The Government is expanding FSM eligibility. All children from households receiving Universal Credit are now eligible, regardless of earnings.



FROM 1/9/26,
Free school meals
available to pupils or
parents receiving:

- ✓ Universal Credit
- ✓ support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Households may also be entitled if they receive:

- income-related Employment and Support Allowance OR
- guarantee element of Pension Credit OR
- meet criteria for families with no recourse to public funds.

NEW FSM CATEGORIES:



TARGETED FSM (tFSM)



If your household receives Universal Credit AND earns £7,400 a year or less



Your child gets a **FREE SCHOOL MEAL**



The school receives **ADDITIONAL FUNDING** for extra support, resources and opportunities.



EXPANDED FSM (eFSM)



If your household receives Universal Credit AND earns **MORE THAN £7,400** a year



Your child gets a **FREE SCHOOL MEAL**



The school will **NOT** receive additional funding for this category.



UFSM - UNIVERSAL INFANT FREE SCHOOL MEALS

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 **AUTOMATICALLY** receive a free school meal.

Applies to all children, regardless of family income or benefits.



APPLYING FOR FSM & ANNUAL CHECKS

If circumstances change, you might be eligible!

APPLY FROM 1 JUNE 2026

via the Lancashire County Council website:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/free-school-meals/>

ANNUAL ELIGIBILITY CHECKS:

From 1 June 2026, Lancashire County Council (LCC) will carry out annual checks. Each year, some children may become eligible, while others may no longer qualify.