



**BISHOP
HOGARTH**

Catholic Education Trust

Guidance Notes for Parents - LGfL FSM Checker

The Trust has signed up to LGfL Free School Meals (FSM) Checker for all schools. This is a free online service that allows parents to quickly check whether their children are eligible for FSM.

Who is eligible for FSM?

From the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year, all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit attending these schools will be entitled to receive a free meal.

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you receive any of the following benefits. Information taken from gov.uk.

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you applied on or after 1 April 2018, your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you receive)

Children who receive these benefits directly, rather than through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals.

Your child may also be eligible if you receive any of the above benefits and your child is both:

- younger than the compulsory age for starting school, and
- in full-time education

If you do not qualify for most benefits (also known as having 'no recourse to public funds'), your child may still be eligible. Ask their school or local authority whether they qualify or see [guidance for families with no recourse to public funds](#) for more information.

Why must I reapply?

Transitional protections are also ending. Since 2018, pupils who became eligible for FSM have kept that entitlement even if their household circumstances changed. These protections end at the close of the 2025-26 academic year. From September 2026, all households must actively meet the eligibility criteria to receive free meals. All families **MUST** check their eligibility

[Type here]

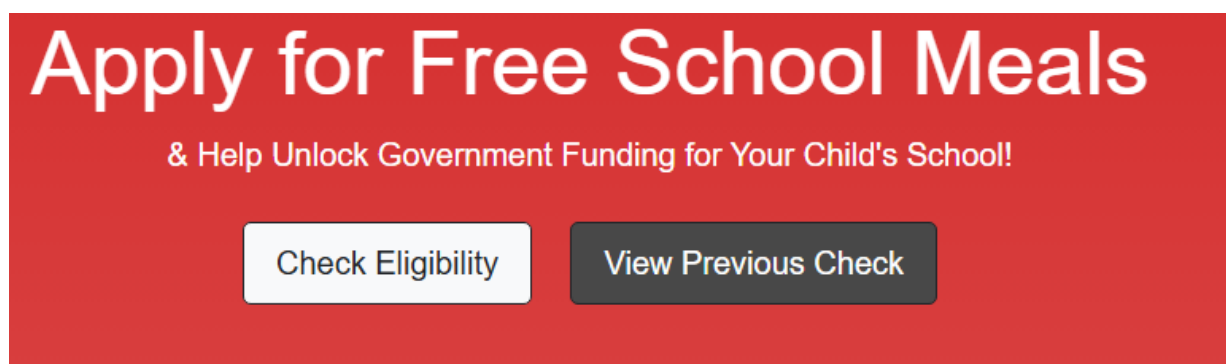
annually starting from September 2026. You can check eligibility using the unique school link that has been shared with all parents via Arbor.

How does it work?

You must enter a few basic details online and the system securely checks them via the Department for Education, which in turn accesses government records including the Department for Work and Pensions, the Home Office and HMRC, to provide an instant yes or no answer. This removes the need for paper applications and speeds up the process for schools. Parents only need to apply once, and schools can recheck their eligibility at any time.

What does the application process look like for a parent?

Home Page - <https://fsm.lgfl.net/>



STEP ONE – Select the correct school or use unique school link for ease and agrees to terms of use.

STEP TWO – add in your personal information

[Type here]

1 School Details

2 Parent Details

3 Child Details

4 Check & Submit

Parent Details

First Name

* required

Last Name

* required

Date of Birth

DD/MM/YYYY

* required

☒ National Insurance Number

☐ NASS Number

National Insurance Number

e.g. AA121212B

* required

Email Address

e.g. parent@email.com

Mobile

e.g. 07123456789

Relationship to child

Back

Save & Continue

STEP THREE – fill in your child’s details

1 School Details

2 Parent Details

3 Child Details

4 Check & Submit

Child Details

First Name

* required

Last Name

* required

Date of Birth

DD/MM/YYYY

* required

Back

Save & Continue

STEP FOUR – you will receive an application summary, and the school will also receive an email to let them know your application has been received.

1 School Details

2 Parent Details

3 Child Details

4 Check & Submit

Please carefully check all details before submitting

Application Summary

School Details

School: Blessed John Duckett Catholic Primary School, Tow Law

Parent Details

First Name: Joanne

Last Name:

Date of Birth:

National Insurance Number:

NASS Number: N/A

Email Address:

Mobile: N/A

Relationship to Child: Mother

Child Details

First Name:

Last Name:

Date of Birth:

☐ I confirm I am authorised to do this check and I would like my decision issued electronically.

Back

Children in Key stage 1

Currently, many children in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 are entitled to receive free meals because of government initiatives.

[Type here]

However, it is important for all parents to check their eligibility because when parents are shown to be eligible, schools can potentially claim extra government funds to improve the school's resources and provide a better service to children.

If you require advice and/or support to complete the FSM checker, please contact your child's school.