



Stoke Prior Community Primary School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to inform you about some important upcoming changes to Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility, which will take effect from the start of the **2026–2027 academic year**.

The Government has announced an expansion of the Free School Meals scheme, meaning that all children from households receiving Universal Credit will be eligible for a free school meal from September 2026, regardless of household earnings. This change is expected to help many more families access support.

Why should you apply?

You may be entitled to receive free school meals if you are in receipt of certain benefits or support. The information collected will allow us to make this assessment. Even if you are unsure whether your child qualifies, **we strongly encourage all families receiving Universal Credit to apply**.

A successful application may:

- Provide your child with a nutritious free meal every school day.
- Save families money on school lunches.
- Ensure eligible pupils receive the support available to them.
- Help schools access additional funding for pupils who meet the targeted eligibility criteria of the funding.

You may be entitled to receive free school meals if you are in receipt of certain benefits or support. You could also raise additional pupil premium funding for your child's school. The information collected in this form will allow us to make this assessment.

What else is changing?

The temporary protections that have allowed some children to continue receiving free school meals regardless of changes in family circumstances will end in summer 2026. From September 2026, eligibility will be reassessed under the new rules. The new Free School Meals (FSM) funding system will operate on a tiered basis, with only pupils who qualify for Targeted FSM will be eligible for Pupil Premium funding. Currently, the school uses Pupil Premium to help reduce the cost of extra-curricular clubs, educational trips and residential visits for eligible pupils. If families who may meet the higher eligibility criteria do not apply for Free School Meals, the school will receive significantly less Pupil Premium funding. This reduction could affect the additional support and opportunities available to pupils

Therefore, even if your child is in Reception, Year 1, or Year 2 and already receives Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM), we strongly encourage you to apply for Free School Meals. Doing so helps ensure that the school can continue to access vital funding to support pupils and enrich their educational experience.

What do you need to do?

To establish eligibility please fill out the form on this link: [Free School Meal Eligibility – Fill out form](#)
You only need to complete this form once. Subsequent rechecks of your eligibility will be carried out annually to assess whether you continue to be eligible for free school meals.

If you have any questions about Free School Meal eligibility or the application process, please contact the school office.

Mr Matt Lewis