

19 June 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Headteacher - Tony Head

We are writing to inform you of important changes to Free School Meals (FSM) which will come into effect from September 2026.

If your child is currently eligible for Free School Meals this may have an impact from September 2026.

Transitional protections for free school meals have been in effect since 1 April 2018. This has meant that pupils becoming eligible for free meals under the benefits-based criteria have retained their entitlement, even if their household circumstances have changed.

Transitional protection will now only apply until the end of the 2026 academic year – your child will continue to receive free school meals up to the end of this school year.

From September 2026 transitional protections for free school meals will end. Households must meet the FSM eligibility criteria from the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year to continue receiving provision.

If you have already applied for free school meals, schools and local authorities will carry out annual eligibility checks for the next academic year– we will do this on your behalf to ensure you continue to receive FSM for the full academic year.

From September 2026, **all children from households receiving Universal Credit will be entitled to receive a free school meal**, regardless of household income.

There will now be two categories of Free School Meals:

Targeted FSM – for families receiving Universal Credit with household earnings below £7,400 per year. These pupils will continue to attract additional funding and support for schools.

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

We strongly encourage all families who think they may be eligible to apply, as you may now be eligible for a free school meal under the expanded FSM criteria.

<https://apply.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/southampton>

If your child is in KS1, you will already be in receipt of Universal Infant Free School Meals however, it is important that we capture your eligibility as this has a positive impact on our funding which is then used to support all children across all year groups.

If you have any questions, please contact the school office.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A M Head', written in a cursive style.

Tony Head
Headteacher