

June 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

Changes to Free School Meals from September 2026

We are writing to let you know about important national changes to Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility that will begin in September 2026.

What's changing

From September 2026, all families receiving Universal Credit will qualify for Free School Meals, regardless of income. This change is expected to support around 500,000 more children nationally, including nearly 4,000 additional pupils in Leicestershire. There will however be two categories of eligibility depending on income:

- **Targeted Eligibility** — Families on Universal Credit with annual earnings of £7,400 or less. Pupils will:
 - Receive Free School Meals
 - Generate Pupil Premium funding for the school
- **Expanded Eligibility** — Families on Universal Credit with earnings above £7,400. Pupils will:
 - Receive Free School Meals
 - Families receiving Free School Meals for the first time will not generate Pupil Premium funding
 - Families who currently receive Free School Meals and are now moving to the "Expanded" category will keep their Pupil Premium Funding

If your child is currently in receipt of Free School Meals, the transitional protections, which have allowed children to keep Free School Meals entitlement even if household income increased, will end in July 2026. From then on, eligibility must be checked annually at the end of each school year.

After checking, children who previously received Free School Meals but no longer qualify will become *Ever6*. This means they will not receive a free school meal but will continue to attract Pupil Premium funding for six further years in compulsory education.

What you need to do now

If your child currently receives Free School Meals, or if you expect to qualify under the new rules (for example, you receive Universal Credit), you need to apply [here](#) (not via the Leicestershire County Council portal) to confirm your entitlement from September. This is particularly important if your circumstances have changed.

We will use this information to check eligibility before the autumn term and then review it annually.

If we do not receive your completed form, **your child will not be able to receive a free school meal in September.**

If you require any further support, we offer a dry goods Food Pantry at Ashby School or we may be able to provide you with an Ashby Foodbank voucher. For any such enquiries, please either contact your child's Year Team Leader or email pupilpremium@ashbyschool.org.uk

If you have any questions or need any help completing the form, please contact pupilpremium@ashbyschool.org.uk or by contacting the school via phone.

Yours sincerely

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