

3 July 2026

Subject: Free School Meals – Important Changes & How to Apply for 2026/27

Dear Parent/Carer

We wanted to let you know about an important update to Free School Meals (FSM) for the 2026/27 academic year.

From this year onwards, Free School Meals eligibility will need to be rechecked by your local authority. This means that based on your current circumstances your status may change.

If you receive any of the following you may be eligible for free school meals

- Universal Credit
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit: (Provided you are 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)

What you need to do

If your child currently receives Free School Meals your local authority will be rechecking your eligibility and will update your status.

If your child is in **Reception, Year 1 or Year 2**, they already receive a free meal at school as part of the Universal Infant Free School Meals scheme. However, this is not the same as applying for FSM based on eligibility, and without applying you may miss out on important additional support.

If you think you may now be eligible or are unsure:

- Complete a new Free School Meals application for 2026/27
- Submit your application as soon as possible to avoid any delay at the start of the year and ensure your child receives their entitlement.

Why it matters

Applying helps to make sure that:

- Your child receives a free, healthy meal each school day
- The school receives additional funding to support your child (this is called Pupil Premium)
- Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programmes
- Support linked to Targeted Free School Meals (TFSM)
- Additional school funding (Pupil Premium) to support your child with resources, interventions and enrichment opportunities
- For children in **Year 3 and above**, a successful FSM application also ensures they receive free meals.

Your child will not be treated differently

We understand some families may feel unsure about applying. Please be reassured that:

- All applications are handled confidentially
- Children receiving FSM are not treated differently
- Meals are provided through the usual school systems
- Your child can still bring a packed lunch if they prefer

How to

You can apply quickly and easily via your local authority:

- **East Riding Council** – [Free school meals](#) and follow the prompts in “How do I apply for free school meals?”
- Call on **01482 394799** or make an appointment at a customer service centre.

If your application is successful, you will either be awarded either **Targeted FSM** or **Expanded FSM**, you will need to let us know what award you have and the start date.

There is more information on the change here [Expanding free school meals: what parents need to know – The Education Hub](#)

If you have any questions or need support completing your application, please contact the school office – we are happy to help.

Thank you for taking the time to check your eligibility. Free School Meals can make a real difference to your child and your family.

Yours faithfully



Mrs K Mason
Executive Headteacher