



HIGH LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Subject: Changes to free school meals from the 2026 to 2027 academic year

Dear Parent or Carer,

We are writing to let you know about changes to free school meals (FSM) from the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year.

What is changing?

Expanded entitlement for families on Universal Credit

From the start of academic year 2026 to 2027, all children in households receiving Universal Credit will be entitled to free school meals, regardless of earnings.

Going forward, there will be two types of eligibility:

- **Targeted FSM:** for households in receipt of universal credit earning £7,400 or less (includes free meals and additional support such as pupil premium).
Other educational entitlements such as the Holiday Activities and Food program (HAF) and the 'extended rights' element of school travel assistance, will also continue to be based on targeted FSM.
- **Expanded FSM:** for households in receipt of universal credit earning above £7,400 (free meals only)

All pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2 will also continue to be entitled to free school meals under the universal infant free school meals policy regardless of family circumstances.

End of transitional protections

Since 2018, some children have continued to receive free school meals, even if their family circumstances changed during the rollout of Universal Credit. This is referred to as transitional protections.

Now that entitlement is being expanded to all families on Universal Credit, these protections will end at the end of the 2025 to 2026 academic year.

This means:

- Some children may **no longer be eligible** from the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year if their family does not receive Universal Credit or another qualifying benefit
- Eligibility will now be based on current benefit status

What you need to do

If your child currently receives free school meals:

- In most cases, you do not need to reapply
- Your child's school or the local authority will check your eligibility automatically using the details already held and inform you of any changes to your FSM eligibility
- In some cases, your child's school or the local authority may contact you to confirm your details

- If your child is starting a new school in September, they will be in touch to confirm whether you need to confirm your details or reapply.
- If you are unsure, please contact your school or local authority for advice.

If your child does not currently receive free school meals:

- **You may now be eligible under the expanded criteria**
- Please complete the form below and send into school via admin@highlane.stockport.sch.uk or bring into the office in September, so school can check on your behalf. If you have already completed this form you will not need to do so again as your details will be already on system for checking

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the office.

Kind regards

Lorraine Bradford
School Business Manager

FSM Checker Agreement

I agree that you will use the information provided to process my claim for free school meals and will contact other sources as allowed by law to verify my initial, and ongoing, entitlement.

I agree that the information may be used to ensure accuracy of records across the local authority and the check against fraud.

I agree that you can inform the school(s) attended by my child of their initial and ongoing entitlement to free school meals.

You may be aware of our Privacy Policy.
Please complete the details below;

I (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss) _____

Parent/Carer DOB _____ Parent/Carer NI Number _____

Telephone Number(s): Landline: _____ Mobile: _____

Email address (for notification): _____

Parent/carers of: _____

Child DOB: _____ Child Class: _____

Address: _____

I give permission for High Lane Primary School to check my eligibility for free school meals.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Note: The above information will only be used by the school for the checking of free school meal eligibility, it may only be shared with the parties listed above.