



LONG MARSTON VA C of E PRIMARY and NURSERY SCHOOL
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Dear Parents and Carers

The Government is changing the way that Free School Meals (FSM) are funded.

From September 2026, all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit attending school will be entitled to receive a free meal. From September 2026, there will be two categories of benefits-based Free School Meals (FSM):

Targeted FSM:

For students in families who are in households in receipt of Universal Credit with annual earnings of £7,400 or less.

Expanded FSM:

A new category covering students who do not qualify for Targeted FSM, but who are in households receiving Universal Credit.

All students who currently receive free school meals will continue to do so until the end of the Summer term 2026, at which point the current transitional protections will end. From the start of the new school year in September, households must meet the new criteria to receive provision.

Free School Meals eligibility rechecks

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) will carry out eligibility rechecks for all pupils currently receiving free school meals so there is no need to reapply unless you are in the current Year 2 as per the note below.

Important reminder – current Year 2 pupils

Parents and carers of pupils currently in Year 2 must reapply for free school meals. This is because these pupils are moving from universal infant free school meals (UIFSM) to means-tested free school meals. A new application is therefore required. If parents or carers do not reapply, eligibility will not continue into the next academic year

If you think you may be eligible, please apply using the links below:-

Check your eligibility for Nursery.

https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ufs/ufsmain?formid=CHSERV_FSMREG

Check your eligibility for UIFSM/KS1 (Reception-Year2).

https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ufs/ufsmain?formid=CHSERV_FSMREG

Check your eligibility for KS2 (Years 3-6).

<https://check-free-school-meals.education.gov.uk/>



'Together we grow and flourish with hope'



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This will ensure your child's claim is processed in time for the start of the new term. You can apply later, but we cannot guarantee the application will be processed before the start of the new academic year.

If you are unable to apply online please complete this form: [Sept 2026 FSM Application](#) and return to school by the 12th June 2026.

Frequently Asked Questions

My child currently receives Free School Meals. Do I need to do anything? Yes. To continue receiving free meals from 1st September 2026, all families must re-apply so eligibility can be re-checked against the new system.

My child does not currently receive Free School Meals, but I receive Universal Credit. Should I apply? Yes. The new Expanded FSM category means that if you currently receive Universal Credit and your net income is above £7,400, your child is now eligible for a free school meal.

I think I am entitled to apply but haven't before. What should I do? Please apply! If your household meets the criteria, your child will be registered to receive a free meal from September.

If you have any queries, please contact the school office, and our team will be happy to help.

Yours sincerely

Laura Whateley
Headteacher

