



Hoylake Holy Trinity CE Primary School

'Learning For Life, Caring For All, Living Each Day To The Full, Together As A Community, with Jesus by our side.'



Free School Meals – Changes from September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to share important updates regarding Free School Meals (FSM) starting this September 2026. Under new government guidance, eligibility has expanded, meaning many more families receiving Universal Credit will now be entitled to free school meals for their children.

There are now two different categories of benefit-based Free School Meals:

- **Targeted Free School Meals:** Available to families on Universal Credit earning £7,400 or less per year (after tax and not including benefits). Children in this category receive free school meals **and** extra government funding for our school—known as **Pupil Premium**—which entitles you to half price clubs and trips.
- **Expanded Free School Meals:** A new category available to all other families receiving Universal Credit, regardless of earnings. Children in this category receive **free school meals**, but do not attract the extra Pupil Premium funding.

What if my child previously received Pupil Premium? If your child was previously eligible for Targeted FSM, their Pupil Premium support remains protected under existing rules (known as "Ever 6 protection") for six years, even if your household income changes or if you move into the Expanded FSM category. Moving to Expanded FSM will not reset or remove your child's existing funding record.

Why you should still complete an eligibility check Even if your child already receives Universal Infant Free School Meals (in Reception, Year 1, or Year 2) or if you aren't sure which category you fall into, we strongly encourage every family on Universal Credit to run a quick check.

Checking takes only a few minutes and ensures:

1. Your child receives their daily free meal.
2. Our school receives any Pupil Premium funding your family qualifies for, directly benefiting your child's education.

You can complete the quick online check using Wirral Council's portal here:

<https://apply.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims-wirral>

There is no downside to checking, and you can re-check at any point during the school year if your household circumstances change.

Thank you for your continued support. Please contact the school office if you need any further information.

Kind regards,

Mrs Wright