



Important Changes to Free School Meals and Pupil Premium Funding

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to make families aware of important changes to Free School Meals and Pupil Premium funding from September 2026.

Summary

- **All children in households receiving Universal Credit will now be eligible to receive Free School Meals.**
- **You will need to complete [the FSM application](#) form even if your child already receives Free School Meals.**

Details

Pupil Premium is additional government funding provided to schools to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. At Langtree School, this funding helps us provide academic intervention, educational visits, enrichment opportunities, music tuition, equipment, mentoring, wellbeing support and other targeted provision.

The Department for Education has recently announced significant changes to Free School Meal eligibility. As a result, we will be reviewing eligibility for all potentially eligible students, **including those currently eligible**, and are asking families to submit a new application where appropriate.

What has changed?

For several years, many pupils have continued to receive Free School Meals under arrangements known as **transitional protections**. These protections are now ending, meaning that eligibility will be reassessed under the new national criteria.

At the same time, the government has expanded Free School Meal eligibility so that **all children in households receiving Universal Credit are now entitled to Free School Meals, regardless of household earnings**.

This means that many families who were not previously eligible may now qualify. [You can read more about transitional protections and the new eligibility criteria here.](#)

Action required

If you receive Universal Credit, or think your child may be eligible for Free School Meals, please complete [the FSM application](#) form as soon as possible.

Please complete the form even if:

- Your child already receives Free School Meals.
- You have applied previously.
- You are unsure whether you qualify.
- Your child does not currently take a school meal.
- Your child brings a packed lunch every day.

A new application is required because all eligibility records are being reviewed ahead of the October census.

Why is this important?

Submitting an application helps ensure that:

- Your child receives any entitlement for which they qualify.
- The school receives the correct level of government funding.
- Support available to eligible students can be accurately identified.
- School records are up to date following the changes to national eligibility rules.

My child does not take school meals. Should I still apply?

Yes. Even if your child chooses not to eat a school meal, we would strongly encourage families receiving Universal Credit to complete an application.

Eligibility information helps ensure that children and schools receive the support and funding to which they are entitled.

What happens if my child was previously eligible?

Some pupils currently receive Free School Meals because of transitional protections that have been in place since 2018.

As these protections are ending, some families may no longer qualify for Free School Meals under the new rules and their meal entitlement may therefore cease.

However, where a child has previously been eligible for Free School Meals, they may continue to attract Pupil Premium funding through the government's **Ever 6** arrangements. This means that schools can continue to receive Pupil Premium funding for eligible pupils for up to six years after their last qualifying period.

Previously Looked After Children and Children in Care

Children who are currently looked after by a local authority, or who were previously looked after and left care through adoption, a special guardianship order or a child arrangements order, remain eligible for **Pupil Premium Plus** funding.

However, if your household also receives Universal Credit, please still complete a Free School Meal

application. Free School Meal eligibility and Pupil Premium Plus are separate sources of funding and support.

Deadline

To ensure eligibility can be checked and recorded before the October census, we ask that applications are submitted by 14th June.

Thank you for your support in helping us ensure that all eligible students receive the funding and support available to them.

If you have any questions, please contact ithorburn@langtreeschool.com.

Kind regards,

Ina Thorburn

Pupil Premium Lead