



Pupil Premium and Free School Meals

Key information and changes from September 2026

From September 2026, Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility expands to all households receiving Universal Credit. FSM and Pupil Premium are distinct entitlements with separate criteria.

Who is eligible for Free School Meals?

There are now two categories of Free School Meals:

- **Targeted FSM:** For families on Universal Credit with net annual household earnings of £7,400 or less. Entitles students to free lunches and potential Pupil Premium support.
- **Expanded FSM:** For families on Universal Credit earning over £7,400. Entitles students to free lunches, **but not automatic Pupil Premium funding.**

What is Pupil Premium?

Pupil Premium is additional Government funding allocated to schools to help improve the educational outcomes of disadvantaged students.

Pupil Premium provides extra funding to support academic progress, wellbeing, uniform, and educational visits for eligible students.

To be eligible for Pupil Premium, students must meet one of the following criteria:

- Currently registered for Targeted Free School Meals (or have been registered at any point in the last 6 years under the Ever 6 FSM rule).
- Looked After Children (LAC) in the care of the local authority, or Previously Looked After Children (PLAC) who have left care through adoption, a special guardianship order, or a child arrangements order.

Service Children Premium: Children with a parent serving in the regular armed forces, or who meet the Service Premium criteria.

How do I apply for Free School Meals?

If you receive Universal Credit or believe your child may meet any of the eligibility criteria, **we strongly encourage all eligible families to complete the Free School Meals / Pupil Premium [application form](#)**, even if you are unsure or if your child does not plan to take school lunches. Submitting an application ensures the school receives vital government funding to directly support your child's education, uniform, and extracurricular activities.

Kind regards,

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