

Date June 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

### Important Information: Free School Meals (FSM) – 2026/27

From the start of the 2026/27 academic year, the Department for Education will remove all transitional protections for Free School Meals (FSM). At the same time, eligibility criteria will be expanded to include **all** children from households receiving Universal Credit.

From September 2026, families will need to meet the updated criteria for their child or young person to continue receiving Free School Meals.

### Eligibility Recheck

In line with these changes, the Local Authority will review all current FSM claims before the start of the new academic year, and annually thereafter. If you remain eligible your school will be informed and your child/young person will continue to receive Free School Meals.

Under the new criteria, FSM eligibility will fall into two categories:

**Targeted** – for pupils in households receiving Universal Credit with annual earnings of £7,400 or less. This provides free school meals **and additional benefits** for both the pupil and the school.

**Expanded** – for pupils in households receiving Universal Credit with annual earnings above £7,400. This provides **free school meals only**.

If your child is no longer eligible following the review, you will be notified via the Citizen Portal. Please check the portal regularly to ensure you receive important updates.

### New Claims

We encourage any parents who believe they may now be eligible, but have not previously applied, to visit our website and submit an application.

Free school meals can save time preparing lunches and provide children with a healthy and varied meal each day.

The online application process is quick, confidential, and provides an immediate eligibility check.

**Apply online:**

[South Glos LIFE | School meals](#)

**Previously Rejected Applications**

As the eligibility criteria have expanded, some families who were previously unsuccessful may now qualify. We encourage you to reapply.

The online application process is quick, confidential, and provides an immediate eligibility check.

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Yours sincerely,

Customer Service