

Nicola Davies – Executive Headteacher

Emma Severn – Head of School

t: (01623) 455920

e: office@suttonroad.org

w: www.suttonroad.org



**Sutton Road Primary
School and Nursery**

Mansfield
Nottinghamshire
NG18 5SF

1st June 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Changes to Free School Meal (FSM) Eligibility from September 2026

We are writing to inform you about important national changes to Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility introduced by the Department for Education from the start of the 2026–2027 academic year.

From September 2026, children from households receiving Universal Credit may be entitled to free school meals. This is an expansion of the current eligibility rules.

What is changing?

Currently, many families receive Free School Meals under “transitional protection” arrangements introduced in 2018. These protections allowed children to continue receiving FSM even if household circumstances changed.

However, these transitional protections will end at the end of the 2025–2026 academic year. From September 2026, eligibility will be reassessed under the new national criteria.

What this means for families

From September 2026:

- Families receiving Universal Credit **may** qualify for Free School Meals.
- Eligibility checks **must** be completed annually.
- Some families who currently receive FSM may no longer qualify if they do not meet the updated eligibility criteria.
- More families may become eligible under the expanded scheme.

What you need to do

We want to ensure that we have checked eligibility for **every** child in school, even if you don't think you will be eligible. Therefore, we ask that you:

- Complete a new FSM application for each of your children. We have made the decision that we will collect this information for current children via a Microsoft Form here - [Sutton Road Primary School & Nursery Free School Meals Eligibility Check – Fill in form](#)
- Inform the school promptly if your circumstances change throughout the year.
- Provide any information required to verify eligibility, if required.

We will then begin checking eligibility for all children during the Summer Term and notify parents if there are changes for your child/children.



Important information

Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will still continue to receive Universal Infant Free School Meals regardless of benefit status but are also eligible for additional funding if they are eligible for FSM. If your child qualifies under the “targeted FSM” criteria (households receiving Universal Credit with annual earnings of £7,400 or less), schools may also receive additional funding to support learning and wellbeing.

If you have any questions, please contact the school office.
Yours faithfully,

Miss J Wall
Office Manager

