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Dear Parent/Carer

Important update about Free School Meals from September

We are writing to let you know about some upcoming changes to Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility from September. The Government is updating the way eligibility is assessed.

Key Headline

- All families in receipt of Universal Credit are now entitled to claim Free School Meals. This is because the government have removed the cap on net earned income.

However

- Some households who children are currently Free School Meals, may no longer qualify.

What this means for you:

- Eligibility status must be re-checked for September and re-checked on a yearly basis.
- You may need to submit a new application which is explained below.
- If your child is currently receiving FSM because you previously qualified under benefits-related criteria, but are no longer in receipt of these benefits, you will not be entitled to FSM from September.

Who Qualifies

Your child can get free school meals if you receive **any** of these benefits:

- Universal Credit (with no earnings limit)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (if you do *not* get Working Tax Credit and earn under £16,190)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999



- **(No Recourse to Public Funds - NRPF)** If you have an immigration status that restricts public funds, your child qualifies if your maximum annual household earnings are below these levels:
- **Outside London (1 child):** Under £22,700.
- **Outside London (2+ children):** Under £26,300.
- **Note:** This applies to BN(O) passport holders, Zambrano carers, spousal visas, and those with no immigration status.

Universal Infant free school meals

- **Infants (Reception, Year 1, and Year 2):** Meals are automatic for everyone, so most families do not need to apply. However, families who meet the benefits criteria **should still apply** so the school receives extra **Pupil Premium funding.** Children who qualify will get support with payments for clubs and trips, and the school receives money to support learning in school.

What you should do:

- To ensure continuation of free meals in September, or if you think you might now be entitled due to the changes, please click on the link below we will then check eligibility with the council.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=10FTsAhFs0qa48CCwc19IgyOOmZvmhVEv0mchP8RXSlUMUs1VklPUDBKUTg2Q0NWUEFNUjc5OThQMy4u

We understand that changes like this can be worrying. Please be assured that we are here to support you and can help you check your eligibility or make a new application if needed.

Kind regards,

Mrs K Flowerdew
Headteacher

