



29th June 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Changes to Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility from September 2026

The Department for Education has changed the eligibility rules for Free School Meals (FSM). As part of these changes, we are required to check the eligibility of all families before the start of the new academic year.

From the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year, all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit attending schools will be entitled to receive a free meal.

Going forward, there will be 2 categories of benefits-based free school meals:

- **Targeted FSM**, which continues to be based on the existing threshold, covering pupils who are in households in receipt of Universal Credit with annual household earnings of £7,400 or less
- **Expanded FSM**, a new category covering pupils who do not qualify for targeted FSM, but who are in households receiving Universal Credit

Please use the link below to apply and update your eligibility:

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/free-school-meals>

If you need any support with this please contact the school and ask for student services.

Yours faithfully,

PASSMORES ACADEMY