LEESLAND C of E FEDERATION

C of E (Controlled) Infant School
Whitworth Road, Gosport PO12 3NL
02392 583872
infantadminoffice@leeslandschools-fed.co.uk

C of E (Controlled) Junior School
Gordon Road, Gosport PO12 3QF
02392 580962
junioradminoffice@leeslandschools-fed.co.uk

June 2026

Dear Leesland Families

This email explains upcoming changes to eligibility for benefits based Free School Meals (FSM). It also outlines what you need to do to apply or check your child's eligibility.

Upcoming Changes
From September 2026, the eligibility criteria for Free School Meals will change. All households receiving Universal Credit will be included, but eligibility will be divided into two groups:

- **Targeted Free School Meals**
  For households receiving Universal Credit with an annual income below £7,400.

- **Expanded Free School Meals**
  For households receiving Universal Credit with an annual income above £7,400.

What You Need to Do

- If your child already receives Free School Meals and you have applied through the Hampshire portal, you do not need to do anything.

- If you think your child may now be eligible, please submit an application through the Hampshire portal:

  Hampshire County Council - Free School Meals Online Application

- Please note: children eligible under the **expanded criteria** will only begin to receive Free School Meals from **September 2026**.

If You Disagree with a Decision
If you have applied and believe the decision is incorrect, please contact your child's school. The school can contact Hampshire County Council on your behalf to request further advice.

Transitional Protections (until August 2026)
Transitional protections have been in place since 1 April 2018 and will continue until the end of the 2025 to 2026 school year.

During this time:

- Any child who becomes eligible for benefits based Free School Meals will continue to receive them until July 2026.
- This will not change even if household income increases.
  From **September 2026**, these protections will end. From this point, all families must meet the new eligibility rules for their child to receive Free School Meals.

Important Information for Reception and Key Stage 1 Parents

All children in Early Years Foundation Stage or Key Stage 1 already receive free meals under the Universal Infant Free School Meals scheme. However, we still encourage you to apply.

This is because schools receive **Pupil Premium funding** for children who qualify under **Targeted Free School Meal eligibility**. This funding helps support your child during their time at school.

For more information on Free School Meals please follow this link to the Government Website -Apply for free school meals - GOV.UK

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

Kind regards,

C. Hope

Mrs C Hope
Executive Headteacher

Free School Meals (FSM) – Important Update

Upcoming Changes (From September 2026)

All households receiving Universal Credit will be eligible, split into two groups:

Targeted FSM
Income below £7,400

Expanded FSM
Income above £7,400 (starts Sept 2026)

What You Need to Do

- **If your child already receives FSM:** No action needed.
- **If you think you are eligible:** Apply via Hampshire County Council.

If You Disagree

Contact your child's school. They can request advice on your behalf.

Reception & KS1 Parents

All children already receive free meals. Apply anyway to help your school receive **Pupil Premium funding.**

Transitional Protection (Until July 2026)

- Eligible children keep FSM until July 2026.
- Continues even if income increases.
- Ends September 2026 – new rules apply.

More Information

Apply online:
Hampshire County Council - Free School Meals

Government info:
GOV.UK Free School Meals

Questions? Contact your child's school