



8 July 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

Changes to Free School Meals from September 2026

We are writing to inform you about important changes to the free school meals (FSM) scheme that will take effect from September 2026.

The Government has announced that from September 2026 **all** families in receipt of Universal Credit will be eligible for FSM. This means that many more children and young people will qualify for support than under the current arrangements. FSM can provide significant financial support for families and help ensure that students receive a nutritious meal during the school day. In addition, applications for FSM can help schools access additional funding through the Government's Pupil Premium programme where eligibility criteria are met.

Nottinghamshire County Council manages FSM applications for Hall Park Academy. Parents and carers can apply online using the following link:

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/education/school-meals/free-school-meals-and-milk>.

We encourage all eligible families to apply. Even if your child currently brings a packed lunch or you are unsure whether you qualify, we strongly encourage you to submit an application. Applying is quick and straightforward, and it ensures that any entitlement can be identified as soon as possible as the council perform regular, ongoing checks meaning you only need to apply once using the current system.

Why apply now?

- Families receiving Universal Credit may become eligible under the expanded arrangements from September 2026.
- Eligible students will receive a free school meal during the school day.
- Applications help ensure that the school receives the funding it is entitled to support students' education and wellbeing.
- Registering as early as possible helps ensure that support is in place promptly when the new arrangements begin or you have a change in circumstances.

Existing Free School Meal protection

The Government's transitional protection arrangements, which have been in place since 2018, are ending from July 2026. Families whose circumstances have changed since being initially being eligible and were allocated FSM under the protected scheme may wish to ensure that their details are up to date and that they have applied through the current process.

If you believe you may be eligible, please do not delay in submitting an application. If you require any support in applying for the FSM scheme, please do not hesitate to contact us using the contact form on our website.

Yours faithfully

Mr R Linthwaite
Operations Manager