



Dear Parents and Carers,

Pupil Premium and Free School Meals

From the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year, the Department for Education (DFE) is delivering an expansion to the Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility to include **all** households in receipt of Universal Credit. There are now 2 categories of FSM:

- **Targeted FSM** which continues to be based on the existing threshold, covering pupils in households in receipt of Universal Credit with annual earnings of £7,400 or less. These children will attract pupil premium funding for their schools and will be able to access the additional support we put in place.
- **Expanded FSM** a new category covering pupils who do not qualify for targeted FSM but are children in households in receipt of Universal Credit, with annual household earnings exceeding £7,400. This cohort of children will only be entitled to a free meal and will not attract pupil premium funding.

Implications of the Free School Meals expansion

If your child has previously been eligible for free school meals before the expansion at the start of 2026 to 2027 academic year, they will form part of the **Ever 6 FSM** cohort. This means that they will continue to attract pupil premium funding.

This will include any child whose household income increases after the expansion, so they either lose FSM eligibility or become eligible for free school meals through Expanded FSM. Your child will remain part of the Ever 6 FSM cohort for 6 years and will continue to attract Pupil Premium funding. These children will be able to access all of the additional support we put in place at Paddox.

If your child becomes eligible for Targeted FSM for the first time, they will also form part of the Ever 6 FSM cohort and will be eligible for pupil premium funding.

From September 2026 onwards, free school meal eligibility will be checked by school annually.

Who is eligible for benefits-related free school meals?

Free school meals are available to children whose parents are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Universal credit (as explained above)

- Support under part VI of the immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Households may also be entitled to a meal if they:

- are in receipt of income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- receive the guarantee element of Pension Credit

Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM)

All children in reception, year 1 and year 2 are entitled to free meals, regardless of the earnings or benefit status of their households. This is thanks to a different government funding scheme called Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM). This should not be confused with pupil premium and benefits related FSM.

We encourage families with children in reception, year 1 and year 2, who are in receipt of any of the benefits listed above, to apply for benefits related free school meals. This is because your child could attract additional funding for their school if they become eligible for Targeted FSM.

How do I register?

To register for benefits related free school meals you will need to do the following:

- ✓ visit the county website <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/education-learning/apply-free-school-meals>
- ✓ complete the form- you will need, your name, date of birth, address and National Insurance number
- ✓ please let the office know that you have applied so we can look out for the notification by emailing admin2625@we-learn.com
- ✓ If you feel you need support to complete the online form, a member of our Pastoral team can assist you

If you need any further information, please contact Mrs Stephanie Ayris via email on ayris.s@welearn365.com

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Stephanie Ayris

Pupil Premium Champion