



St. Mary's RC Primary School, a Voluntary Academy

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"Called to love as God loves"

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22nd June 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

We are writing to inform you of some important changes to Free School Meals (FSM) which will take effect from September 2026.

What is changing?

End of transitional protection

Since April 2018, children who qualified for free school meals have continued to receive them even if their family's circumstances changed.

This protection will stop at the end of the 2025/26 school year. From September 2026, all families will need to meet the current eligibility criteria to continue receiving free school meals.

FSM expansion

From September 2026, more children will be able to access free school meals. There will be two types:

- Targeted free school meals: For families receiving Universal Credit with household earnings of £7,400 or less per year
- Expanded free school meals: For families receiving Universal Credit who do not meet the income threshold above



What do you need to do?

Oldham schools

- If you already receive Housing Benefit or Council Tax support, you do not need to apply
- If you receive other benefits, you will need to apply

Apply here: [Instructions | Free School Meals \(FSM\) application form](#)

Why apply?

Applying for free school meals can help your family by:

- Saving around £480+ per child each year
- Providing your child with a healthy, nutritious meal every school day

Please note, all pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM). This is not the same as 'Free School Meals'. If you think you are eligible and your child is in one of these year groups it is still worth applying as, at the moment, families who are entitled receive holiday food vouchers at the end of each term to spend at local supermarkets.

If you need any help or have any questions, please contact your school office – we are happy to help.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs L Clerkin
Headteacher