

June 2026



UXBRIDGE  
HIGH SCHOOL

Dear parent/carer

## Important Changes to Free School Meals Eligibility

We are writing to inform you of important upcoming changes to Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility that may affect your child. Please read this letter carefully, as the relevant section for your family will depend on your current circumstances.

### For Families Whose Child Currently Receives Free School Meals

Your child is currently receiving Free School Meals, and we want to make sure you are fully informed of changes that will take effect at the end of this academic year.

**End of transitional protections:** Since 2018, the Government has had transitional protections in place that allowed some families to continue receiving Free School Meals even if their household circumstances changed, for example, if earnings rose above the eligibility threshold. These transitional protections will end permanently at the close of the current academic year.

This means that from September 2026, eligibility will be assessed under the new rules, as set out below. It is therefore possible that your child's current entitlement may change.

#### What this means for you:

- Your child's Free School Meals entitlement will continue until the last day of the academic year (Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2026)
- From September 2026, your household will need to meet the new eligibility criteria (see below) in order for your child to continue receiving Free School Meals.
- If you believe you will continue to be eligible, you will need to reapply.

### For Families in Receipt of Universal Credit

We want to make you aware that if your household currently receives Universal Credit, your child may be eligible for Free School Meals, either now or from September 2026 when the new rules come into effect.

#### Current eligibility (until end of 2025–2026 academic year)

At present, children in Universal Credit households are eligible for Free School Meals only if their household's net annual earnings (not including benefit payments) are £7,400 or less.

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## **New eligibility from September 2026**

From September 2026, the Government is expanding Free School Meals to all children in households receiving Universal Credit, regardless of household earnings. This means the £7,400 earnings cap will be removed entirely, and every child whose family is on Universal Credit will automatically qualify.

### **What this means for you:**

- If your household earns over £7,400 net per year from employment, your child will qualify for Free School Meals from September 2026.
- If your household earns £7,400 or less per year net from employment, your child may already be eligible.

### **What You Should Do Next**

If you are unsure whether your child is currently eligible, or whether you may qualify from September 2026, you can apply online via:

<https://apply.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims>

If you previously applied for Free School Meals and recently received a notification confirming your application under the expanded eligibility criteria, please be aware that your child's meals will not begin until September 2026. You do not need to take any further action. We will automatically receive a record of your confirmed application, and your child's eligibility will be added to our system over the summer, ahead of the new academic year.

We understand these changes may raise questions, and we are happy to support any family who needs guidance, please contact us via email to [parents@uhs.org.uk](mailto:parents@uhs.org.uk)

Yours sincerely

**L Seymour**  
**Principal**