

Deansfield Primary School

Dairsie Road, Eltham, London, SE9 1XP

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Executive Headteacher Clara Daly

Interim Head of School Karen Baldwin



23rd September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Changes to free school meals from the 2026 to 2027 academic year

We are writing to let you know about changes to free school meals (FSM) from the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year.

What is changing?

Expanded entitlement for families on Universal Credit

From the start of academic year 2026 to 2027, all children in households receiving Universal Credit will be entitled to free school meals, regardless of earnings.

Going forward, there will be two types of eligibility:

- **Targeted FSM:** for households in receipt of universal credit earning £7,400 or less (includes free meals and additional support such as pupil premium and school journey grants). Other educational entitlements such as the Holiday Activities and Food program (HAF).
- **Expanded FSM:** for households in receipt of universal credit earning above £7,400 (free meals only)

Families with no recourse to public funds may also be eligible for Targeted FSM subject to meeting separate criteria.

All pupils in a London primary school will continue to be entitled to free school meals under the London Mayor's scheme regardless of family circumstances.

However, we ask you to apply if you think you are now entitled under the new scheme, or if your circumstances have changed as Deansfield will receive additional funding which will be used to benefit your children.

End of transitional protections

Since 2018, some children have continued to receive free school meals, even if their family circumstances changed during the rollout of Universal Credit. This is referred to as transitional

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protections. Now that entitlement is being expanded to all families on Universal Credit, these protections will end at the end of the 2025 to 2026 academic year.

This means:

- Some children may no longer be eligible from the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year if their family does not receive Universal Credit or another qualifying benefit
- Eligibility will now be based on current benefit status

What you need to do

If your child currently receives free school meals:

- In most cases, you do not need to reapply
- In some cases, your child's school or the local authority may contact you to confirm your details

If your child does not currently receive free school meals

- You may now be eligible under the expanded criteria
- Please complete this form to grant us consent to check on your behalf: [Free School Meals Application Form 2026 – Fill in form](#)
- If you prefer, you can check yourself via this link: [Online FSM Application](#)

If you are not eligible now, your application will automatically be checked periodically, and you will be notified if your entitlement changes.

Please help us to receive additional funding at no cost to yourselves by applying by
Monday, 28th September 2026.

Thank you for your continued support.

Kind regards
Mrs Baldwin