



Park Grove
PRIMARY ACADEMY

23rd June 2026

Dear Parent / Guardian,

Re: Important Update – National Free School Meal Changes for September 2026

We are writing to provide you with an important update regarding legal changes being introduced across the country by the Department for Education (DfE) concerning Free School Meals, and how this impacts your child's registration for the upcoming school year starting in September 2026.

What is changing nationally?

The Government is expanding eligibility criteria nationally. From September 2026, all children from households receiving Universal Credit, as well as families receiving certain other benefits and support, will be legally eligible to receive Free School Meals.

As you may know, our school already uses the **Online Free School Meals (OFSM) software** to manage our applications and verification processes. While our software system remains the same, the eligibility rules governing it are being updated strictly in accordance with these new national government directives.

Automatic Rechecks for September 2026

Because of these new expanded criteria mandated by the DfE, the OFSM system will be running automatic rechecks on all existing family profiles before the start of the new term in September 2026.

What this means for you:

- **If you have already registered on our OFSM portal:**

You do not need to fill out a brand-new application. The system will use your existing details to recheck your eligibility against the updated September 2026 criteria.

- **If you have never registered:**

Due to the criteria widening, families who did not qualify in the past may now be legally eligible. We want **ALL** parents to ensure they have an active registration on the system. Once your details are in the OFSM portal, it will continue to automatically check your status in the background. If your circumstances ever change, the system will detect it instantly and ensure your child receives free school meals without you having to submit any extra paperwork.

Please Note: If the system is unable to verify your eligibility under the new September 2026 rules due to incorrect or missing information, your child's free school meals may be disrupted when the new term begins.

How to Register on the Portal

To submit a new registration if you have never used the system before, please use the link below:

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

- **If you have multiple children at this school:**

You can manage and link all of your children under one single account.

- **If your child is transferring to a new school this September:**

Please ensure you check with their new school for guidance on their process.

Additional School Funding (Pupil Premium)

We would like to remind all parents—including those with children in Reception, Year 1, or Year 2 who automatically receive Universal Infant Free School Meals—that an active registration on OFSM is vital. A successful check ensures our school continues to receive Pupil Premium funding from the government, which is used directly to provide extra teaching staff, targeted learning resources, and extracurricular activities for the children

If you have any questions, need to update your details, or require support accessing the digital portal, please contact the school office directly, and our team will be glad to assist you.

Yours faithfully,

Jo Sawyer

Headteacher

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