

FREE SCHOOL MEALS CHANGES FROM SEPTEMBER 2026

Important Information for Parents and Carers

More Children Will Be Eligible for Free School Meals
From September 2026, the Government is expanding Free
School Meal (FSM) eligibility.

All children in households receiving Universal Credit will be
able to apply for Free School Meals.



Did you know that
claiming free schools
meals means that
your child will get
access to free
school holiday activities
and food!



What Does This Mean for Families?

- ✓ More families will qualify for Free School Meals.
- ✓ Schools will check eligibility every year to make sure records are up to date.
- ✓ Families who think they may be eligible should apply as soon as possible.

Need Help?

✉ office@chiltonprimary.co.uk

☎ (01843) 597695

(Monday to Friday, 8:30am – 4:00pm)



Important Changes to Existing Free School Meal Entitlements

The current transitional protection arrangements will end from September 2026.

This means that some children who currently receive Free School Meals under previous protection rules may no longer be eligible if they do not meet the new criteria.

If your child's eligibility changes, you will be informed.

Annual Eligibility Checks

From June 2026, eligibility checks will be carried out automatically through Kent County Council's Online Free School Meals system.

Parents and carers do not need to reapply each year if they already have an active application, but schools and families will be notified if eligibility changes.

New to Kent or Recently Moved School?

If your child has transferred from another local authority area and their Free School Meal eligibility was confirmed by their previous school, you will need to submit a new application through Kent County Council's system from 1 June 2026.

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