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Dear parent/carers,

Re: expanded free school meal (FSM) eligibility and the pupil premium

Your child may newly qualify for free school meals, and we want to encourage you to register them.

From September 2026, **all pupils in households receiving Universal Credit are eligible for free school meals.**

Your household income doesn't matter – as long as you receive Universal Credit, your child can claim free school meals. We strongly encourage you to check if you're eligible under the new criteria. See below for more information on how to check if your child qualifies.

Children in reception, year 1 and year 2 will continue to receive free school meals through a different scheme. However, if they are also eligible for free school meals in line with the criteria below, we still really want you to register – see why below.

Your child may also get free school meals if you receive any of the benefits listed below and your child is younger than the compulsory age for starting school and in full-time education (or if part-time, they attend both before and after the lunch period).

Why register for free school meals?

Pupils who are registered for free school meals will get healthy, nutritious and balanced food at school that helps make sure they're ready to learn and thrive at school.

Registering your child for free school meals is also important because **the school might get extra 'pupil premium' funding from the government as a result** – for each eligible pupil, the school will get an extra **£1,550** in pupil premium funding in 2026/27.

If you prefer your child to have packed lunches, don't worry – they can still have this if they're registered for free school meals.

You can find more information about pupil premium on our website at [Chilton Primary School - Pupil Premium and Free School Meals](#) You can see what we spent it on in the past academic year and how it will be spent this year. For example, we've previously used pupil premium funding for:

- Educational provision/resources
- Academic interventions
- Wellbeing and self-esteem building interventions

'One Childhood One Chance'

Chilton Primary School, Ramsgate Arts Primary School and Upton Junior School are operated by **Viking Academy Trust** which is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 09449979. The Registered Office is at Chilton Primary School, Chilton Lane, Ramsgate, Kent, CT11 0LQ. Viking Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



Is my child eligible for free school meals and the pupil premium?

From September 2026, there will be 2 categories of free school meals:

Targeted FSM – your child may be eligible if you receive:

- Universal Credit and have an annual household income of £7,400 or less
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit

Pupils receiving targeted FSM:

- Can receive free school meals
- Will attract pupil premium funding for the school
- May be eligible for other support, such as the Holiday Activities and Food Programme [Holiday Activities and Food Programme \(HAF\) - Kent County Council](#)

Expanded FSM – your child is eligible if you receive:

- Universal Credit **and** have an annual household income of **over £7,400**
- Pupils receiving expanded FSM:
- Can receive free school meals
- Will not attract pupil premium funding for the school, nor be eligible for other support that's based on targeted FSM

How do I register?

To check eligibility, please visit: [Apply for free school meals - Kent County Council](#)

You will need to provide:

- Your own name and date of birth
- Contact details
- National Insurance Number or National Asylum Seekers Number
- Child's name and date of birth

More information

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school office.

You can also find more information at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

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PARENT/CARER FACTSHEET - Pupil premium and free school meals: FAQs

Pupil premium FAQs

What is pupil premium funding?

Pupil premium is additional funding for schools for pupils who:

- Are registered for targeted free school meals (FSM)
- Have been registered for FSM at any point in the past 6 years
- Are, or have been, in care
- Have parents in the armed forces

How much pupil premium funding does the school receive?

At Chilton Primary School, we get an **extra £1,550** in 2026/27 for every eligible pupil who is registered for targeted free school meals. This extra money makes a real difference to the quality of education we can offer.

Free school meals (FSM) FAQs

Will the fact my child is registered for FSM be made public?

We keep this information as confidential as possible. We do not publish identifying details of children registered for FSM.

My child already has free school meals: are they still eligible?

From September 2026, all pupils will need to meet the eligibility criteria, set out in the letter above, to receive free school meals. This includes pupils who already have free school meals.

- If your child has already been registered for free school meals, you do not need to apply again this year

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