

Thursday 15th October 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to you because we want to make sure that every child receives all the support and opportunities available to them. As such, we are encouraging families to check whether they may be eligible for **Free School Meals** or **Targeted Free School Meals with additional Pupil Premium**.

Free School Meals

... who is eligible?

From September 2026, **children in households receiving Universal Credit are eligible for Free School Meals, regardless of household income.** There are also other qualifying circumstances. A child may be eligible if their parent/carer receives:

- **Universal Credit** – children are now eligible regardless of household earnings.
- **Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).**
- **The guarantee element of Pension Credit.**
- **Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.**
- **Support under the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) arrangements,** subject to the relevant income and other criteria.

Targeted Free School Meals with additional Pupil Premium

...who is eligible?

- ✓ **Universal Credit with annual household earnings of £7,400 or less**
- ✓ **Income-related Employment and Support Allowance**
- ✓ **The guarantee element of Pension Credit**
- ✓ **Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999**
- ✓ **Certain forms of support if your family has No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)**

There are additional rules for some families, so if you are unsure, we encourage you to check.

Why is this important?

- **Free School Meals** offer financial support to families.
- If your child is eligible for **Targeted Free School Meals with additional Pupil Premium**, schools are given funding to help children overcome barriers to learning and make the most of their education. At our school, this funding can help us provide additional opportunities and support, which may include:
 - extra learning and academic support
 - enrichment activities and experiences
 - pastoral and wellbeing support
 - resources and activities that help children feel confident and succeed

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 receive Universal Infant Free School Meals. However, **if your family meets the criteria above, it is still important to apply** because Universal Infant Free School Meals are not the same as Targeted Free School Meals. Registering your child as eligible for Targeted Free School Meals can mean that our school receives additional Pupil Premium funding.

It's easy to check

You can apply through **Dorset Council's confidential Free School Meals service**.

You will normally need your National Insurance number and may need to provide information from your benefit documents.

Apply or check your eligibility:

- **Dorset Council – Free School Meals** www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/free-school-meals

If you are unsure whether you qualify, **please apply and let Dorset Council check**.

If you need help with an application, please speak to the school office. We are happy to help.

Thank you for helping us make sure every child has the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive.

Kind Regards,

SSMPS