



1<sup>st</sup> July 2026

## Free School Meals Update

Dear Parent/Carer,

### Free School Meals from September

To receive free school meals in September, you will need to apply before the end of this term, as the eligibility criteria has changed. Parents will also need to reapply on an annual basis moving forwards.

### Children Currently Receiving Free School Meals

You will need to apply for free school meals for your child even if they are currently receiving them. This is because more children will be eligible in the future as the government has changed the criteria for the next academic year.

### Newly Eligible for Free School Meals

More children will be eligible for free school meals in the future. 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.

### How do I Apply for Free School Meals?

The quickest and easiest way to register for free school meals is via the Southend City Council's website: [Free School Meals](#). *You will need to be registered with MySouthend to return the form.*

If you are **not** able to use the City's online application form, please use the form on the second page of this letter (or ask for a hard copy of the form from the office) and return it to school as soon as possible.

### More information

Not sure if your child is eligible for free school meals? More information about who is eligible can be found on the government website: [www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals](http://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals).

Please contact the school office if you need any advice.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Farrell  
Headteacher



# Free School Meals Eligibility Check

## Details of Parent / Carer (please use capitals)

Full name of person receiving the benefit (must be parent/carer)	
Relationship to the child	
Date of birth (of the parent/carer)	
National insurance number, or national asylum seeker number	
Contact phone number	
Contact email	

## Details of children at this school (please use capitals)

Number of Children at <b>Hamstel Junior School</b>	
Full name and date of birth of child 1 (at HJS)	
Full name and date of birth of child 2 (at HJS)	
Full name and date of birth of child 3 (at HJS)	
Full name and date of birth of child 4 (at HJS)	

## Declaration

By signing below, I confirm that:

I allow the use of the data in this form for the purpose of checking whether my children are entitled to free school meals.

I allow the sharing of the above data with the schools my children attend and its local authority, for the purpose of providing free school meals if entitlement is confirmed.

This includes re-applying for free school meals in future.

Signature.....Date.....