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10 June 2026

Sent Via Email

Dear Parent/Carer,

Important Information: Free School Meals (FSM) – 2026/27

From the start of the 2026/27 academic year, the Department for Education will remove all transitional protections for Free School Meals (FSM). At the same time, eligibility criteria will be expanded to include children from **all** households receiving Universal Credit.

From September 2026, families will need to meet the updated criteria for their child or young person to continue receiving Free School Meals. Please note that no changes to Free School Meals will take effect before September.

Eligibility Recheck

In line with these changes, the Local Authority will review all current FSM claims before the start of the new academic year, and annually thereafter. **As JCA is a South Glos school, all JCA families who wish to check their eligibility for Free School Meals must apply directly to South Glos Council regardless of where you live**. If you remain eligible your school will be informed and your child/young person will continue to receive Free School Meals.

Under the new criteria, FSM eligibility will fall into two categories:

Targeted – for pupils in households receiving Universal Credit with annual earnings of £7,400 or less. This provides free school meals and additional benefits for both the pupil and the school.

Expanded – for pupils in households receiving Universal Credit with annual earnings above £7,400. This provides free school meals only.

If your child is no longer eligible following the review, you will be notified via the Citizen Portal. Please check the portal regularly to ensure you receive important updates.

New Claims

We encourage any parents who believe they may now be eligible, but have not previously applied, to visit our website and submit an application. Free school meals can save time preparing lunches and provide children with a healthy and varied meal each day.

The online application process is quick, confidential, and provides an immediate eligibility check. Please use the link below to apply.

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Previously Rejected Applications

As the eligibility criteria have expanded, some families who were previously unsuccessful may now qualify. We encourage you to reapply.

Apply online:

South Glos LIFE | School meals

The South Glos Contact Centre is also available to help those who are unable to access the online application or require additional help. Contact **01454 868008** for more information.

Yours sincerely,

Gemma Read

Head of School