

17th July 2026

St John Fisher

Catholic High School



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Important Changes to Free School Meals (FSM) Eligibility and Applications for September 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are writing to inform you of important changes to Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility that will take effect from the start of the 2026/27 academic year. We encourage all families who believe they may be eligible to submit an application as soon as possible.

Changes to Free School Meals Eligibility

Since April 2018, transitional protections have allowed pupils who became eligible for Free School Meals to continue receiving them, even if their household circumstances changed.

These protections are due to end at the conclusion of the 2025/26 school year. From September 2026, all families will need to meet the current eligibility criteria to continue receiving Free School Meals.

Please ensure that you submit an application before 1 September 2026.

If a new application is not submitted and approved where required, your child may not receive Free School Meals from the start of term on Monday 7 September 2026.

Who Can Apply?

Your child may be eligible for Free School Meals if you receive any of the following benefits:

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and your annual gross income is no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit, where household income is less than £7,400 per year after tax (excluding benefits received)

Children who receive these benefits directly, rather than through a parent or guardian, may also be eligible. The eligibility rules apply equally to birth parents, carers and foster parents. Where a child is in care, the application should be completed using the details of the child's current carer.

Families with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) may still be eligible in certain circumstances. If this applies to you, please contact the school for advice or refer to the Government guidance for families with NRPF.

Apply Online Using the LGfL Free School Meals Checker

Our school will be using the LGfL Free School Meals Checker for all FSM eligibility checks going forward. Parents and carers can check eligibility and apply online using the following link: <https://fsm.lgfl.net/app>

The LGfL system will:

- Check your eligibility instantly.
- Provide confirmation on screen and by email.



Web: www.stjohnfisherschool.org.uk
Email: Enquiries@stjohnfisherschool.org.uk



- Notify the school automatically if you are eligible as the school is connected to the LGfL checking service.

If you believe you are eligible and have not had confirmation, please contact us so that we can ensure the process has been completed, the school enquiries email address will be monitored over the summer holiday period to facilitate this.

The LGfL Privacy Policy can be viewed here: <https://fsm.lgfl.net/privacy>

Important Information from Peterborough City Council

Peterborough City Council is also writing directly to families who may be eligible for Free School Meals but are not currently registered.

If you receive a letter from the Council, please take a few minutes to read it carefully and use the links provided.

Registering for Free School Meals can provide significant benefits for children and families, including:

- Help with school meal costs.
- Access to additional support over the summer through the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme, where eligible.
- Benefits worth an estimated minimum of £495 per child, per year for households.

In addition, schools receive extra funding through the Pupil Premium, which helps provide additional support for pupils' learning, wellbeing and educational outcomes.

Even if your child currently brings a packed lunch or does not take a school meal, it is still important to check whether they are entitled and complete an application if eligible. Registering ensures that both families and schools receive the support available to them.

Please look out for correspondence from Peterborough City Council over the coming weeks and respond as soon as possible if you receive a letter.

What You Need to Do

- Check whether you may be eligible for Free School Meals.
- Complete an application online at <https://fsm.lgfl.net/app>
- Submit your application by 1 September 2026.
- Complete any actions in the letter from Peterborough City Council
- Contact the school office if you require any help with the application process. During the summer holidays the school enquiries email address will be monitored for Free School Meal applications.

We strongly encourage all families to check their eligibility, even if they are unsure whether they qualify. A successful application could provide valuable support for your child and family, as well as additional funding for the school.

Thank you for your continued support.

St John Fisher Catholic High School