



Reading Girls' School

Principal: Marika Farrugia

Dear Parents/Carers,

Important Update – Free School Meals from September 2026

We are writing to let you know about some upcoming changes to benefit-related free school meals (BFSM) from September 2026.

From the start of the 2026–2027 academic year, all families receiving Universal Credit will be eligible for free school meals. At the same time, the current “transitional protection” arrangements (which have been in place since April 2018) will end. This means that all families will need to meet the eligibility criteria from September in order to continue receiving free school meals.

What this means for you

If your child currently receives free school meals, or if you think your child may now be eligible because your household receives Universal Credit, we kindly ask that you complete and return the - [Online FSM Application](#) form.

If your child already receives BFSM, this will continue until the end of the summer term. **However, to make sure meals continue from September, a new application must be submitted and eligibility confirmed.**

We would really appreciate it if you could complete - [Online FSM Application](#) as soon as possible.

Who is eligible?

You may be eligible if you receive one or more of the following:

Universal Credit

Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

A pupil is only eligible to receive a free school meal where both:

- A claim for this support has been made
- Their eligibility has been verified by the school where they are enrolled or by the local authority

Households may also be entitled to a meal if they:

- Are in receipt of income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Receive the guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Meet criteria set out in separate guidance for families with no recourse to public funds

Please note that eligibility is confirmed once an application has been submitted and verified by the school or local authority.

Please visit [Apply for free school meals - GOV.UK](#) for the government guidance.

Why are we recommending you apply?

Healthy Meals: Your child can receive a nutritious lunch of their choice every day, from our varied menu which will help them focus and learn.

Extra School Funding: If you qualify, our school may receive extra funding (Pupil Premium) to pay for valuable

learning resources, extra staff, and clubs—even if your child prefers packed lunches.

Extra Benefits for Your Child: Registering can potentially qualify your family for additional support, such as help with the cost of school trips, uniform allowances, and free holiday activity clubs.

Completing your online form

[The standard application form for free school meals - Online FSM Application](#)

There is also a [Self-Employed declaration](#) which, if you are self employed, and must be handed into Reception to accompany the online application form.

Should you be a family with no recourse to public funds please complete the [NRPF application](#) instead of the standard online application form and you will need to print [NRPF application](#), complete and return this to Reception.

Just a quick reminder that if the form isn't completed and returned, you may lose your current entitlement or miss out on any new entitlements.

If you have any questions or would like help with the form, please don't hesitate to contact the school.

Thank you for helping us secure the best possible funding and resources for both your child/children and our school.

Kind regards,



Ms M Farrugia
Principal