



06 July 2026

Dear Parents / Carers

The Government has announced that the eligibility criteria for Free School Meals will change from September 2026. This letter provides a summary of these changes. For more detailed information, please click the link below to view the Department for Education guidance:

[Department for Education Guidance - Free School Meals](#)

Checking eligibility for Free School Meals benefits both the child and their family, as well as the school. Some families may be entitled to Free School Meals, which could save parents more than £15 per week per child. For a family with two children at school, this could mean savings of over £1,000 per year.

From the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year, all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit, regardless of household earnings, will be entitled to a free meal. Under these changes, there will be two categories of FSM eligibility:

- **Targeted FSM**

Children from households in receipt of Universal Credit with annual household earnings of **£7,400 or less**, will be eligible for targeted FSM. In addition to receiving free meals, Y7-Y11 pupils eligible for targeted FSM will attract pupil premium funding for their school.

- **Expanded FSM (From Sept)**

Children from households in receipt of Universal Credit, with annual household earnings **exceeding £7,400** will be entitled to expanded FSM (meals only).

At Aldercar High School we use an online system that enables you to check your eligibility through the online portal Synergy. As student's circumstances may change at any time, once you have entered your details, the system will regularly update, and we will have access to up-to-date information without ever needing to contact you. This includes annual rechecks.

All you are required to do is follow the link below and enter details which include your name, date of birth and National Insurance Number:

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/education/schools/your-child-at-school/meals/school-meals/free-school-meals.aspx>

**If you currently receive FSM, it is important that you recheck your eligibility.** If an eligibility check is not completed, or if the check indicates that you are no longer eligible, your FSM entitlement will finish at the end of this term. However, your child will remain part of our Pupil Premium cohort.

Kind Regards

Phil Smith  
Headteacher

