



Ormiston Victory Academy

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Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Changes to Free School Meal Eligibility from September 2026

We are writing to let you know about important changes to Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility that will come into effect from **September 2026**. The Government has announced that, from the start of the **2026-2027 academic year, all children whose parent or carer receives Universal Credit will be eligible for a free school meal**, regardless of household earnings. This is a significant change and means that many more families will now qualify for support.

What is changing?

From **September 2026**:

- All children from households receiving **Universal Credit** will be entitled to a free school meal.
- The previous Universal Credit earnings threshold will no longer apply for free meal eligibility.
- The **traditional protection arrangements**, which have been in place since 2018, will end. This means that eligibility will now be based on a family's current circumstances and will be reviewed annually.

What does this mean for your family?

If you currently receive **Universal Credit**, your child may now be eligible for free school meals, even if you were not previously entitled. There are two tiers of entitlement:

- Targeted FSM: if you earn under £7,400 a year, your children will be entitled to FSM and extra support for their school
- Expanded FSM: if you earn above £7,400, your children will be entitled to FSM only

If your child currently receives free school meals because of the transitional protection arrangements, their eligibility will be reviewed before September 2026. If you no longer meet the new eligibility criteria, your child's entitlement may end from the start of the new academic year.

What do you need to do?

We encourage all families who receive **Universal Credit** to apply for free school meals if they have not already done so.

If your child currently receives free school meals, you do not need to reapply. Norfolk County Council are conducting eligibility checks, and confirmation of entitlement will be sent to existing FSM eligible families before the end of the summer holiday.

We encourage eligible families to apply for benefits-related free school meals if they meet any of the following criteria:

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Families with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) may also be eligible

Norfolk County Council have updated their Free School Meal application forms which you can find on our academy website on our Pupil Premium page [Ormiston Victory Academy - Pupil Premium and Free School Meals](#)

Completed forms can be sent straight to Norfolk County Council via email to fsm@norfolk.gov.uk, or by post to: Free School Meals, Norfolk County Council, County Hall, Norwich, NR1 2DH. Alternatively, you can send these via Student Services at the academy.

If you are unsure whether your child is eligible, or if you have any further questions or queries, please feel free to contact Mrs Bardwell on h.bardwell@ormistonvictoryacademy.co.uk

Kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Naomi Palmer', with a horizontal line underneath.

Miss Naomi Palmer

Principal