



**Danny Hall**  
Service Delivery Lead (Education)  
Loxley House  
Station Street  
Nottingham  
NG2 3NG

[www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk](http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

13<sup>th</sup> June 2025

## **Important Update – Free School Meals Eligibility (June 2025)**

Dear Parent/Carer,

We recently wrote to you regarding changes to Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility. However, since that update, the Department for Education has issued new guidance, published on 5th June 2025, which means the information previously provided is now out of date.

### **What's happening?**

At present, some children are receiving Free School Meals under what is known as transitional protection. This means that if a child qualified for Free School Meals at any point since April 2018, they have continued to receive them even if their family's income has since increased. This protection was originally due to end on 31st March 2025.

However, following the government's latest update, this protection will now remain in place until the end of the 2025/26 school year. This means that both existing and new eligible pupils will continue to receive Free School Meals, even if circumstances change, until July 2026.

### **What will change from September 2026?**

From the start of the 2026/27 school year (September 2026), the government plans to end all transitional protections. This includes those that would have otherwise had protection until the end of their school phase (Year 6 to 7 or leaving Year 11).

At that point:

- All families will need to meet the eligibility criteria in place at that time in order for their child to continue receiving Free School Meals.
- All eligible pupils will need to submit a new application for Free School Meals for the 2026/27 school year.


The government has also announced that the income threshold for eligibility will be increased from September 2026, which may mean some families who previously did not qualify could become eligible.


### **What do I need to do now?**

At this stage, no immediate action is required if your child is already receiving Free School Meals. We will contact you nearer the time with more details about the application process for September 2026.

### **Where can I get more information or help?**

If you have any questions or need support with anything related to Free School Meals, please contact us:

 [pupil.benefits@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:pupil.benefits@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

 0115 841 5568

 [www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/pupilbenefits](http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/pupilbenefits)

We will continue to keep you informed as further details are confirmed by the government.

Sincerely,

**Danny Hall**  
Service Delivery Lead (Education)  
Nottingham City Council