

Dear Parent

The end of Transitional Protection Free School Meals 2026

Transitional Protection (TP) Free School Meals (FSM) was introduced from April 2018. This meant that if a family no longer met the income criteria for FSM the pupil could continue to receive them until the rollout of Universal Credit had completed.

The Government previously announced TP was ending on 31 March 2025.

You may now be aware from the news that there have been some changes to the previous guidance regarding the future of FSM. The changes will now be as follows:

- There will be new eligibility criteria from **September 2026**, which will allow all parents in receipt of Universal Credit to qualify for FSM not just those with earnings below the current earnings threshold.
- Transitional protection is still due to end, but it will not be until **September 2026**, this means from September 2026 households must meet the eligibility criteria to be entitled to free school meals, if on review they do not meet the eligibility criteria, entitlement to free school meals will be stopped.

All children currently eligible will remain to be so until these changes come into force.