



Coulston Church of England Primary School
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Head Teacher: Mr Paul Garratty B.Ed (Hons); MA

Dear Parents & Carers,

June 2026

IMPORTANT: Changes to Free School Meals from September 2026

We are writing to inform you of significant national updates to the Free School Meals (FSM) criteria, which will come into effect in September 2026. Please review the details below carefully to determine how these changes impact your family and to understand the necessary actions required.

Expanded Eligibility Criteria

The Government has expanded the eligibility criteria for Free School Meals. Commencing September 2026, all children residing in households that receive Universal Credit will qualify for Free School Meals. This initiative aims to extend vital nutritional support to a broader number of families.

Mandatory Application Requirement

Please note that Free School Meals are not allocated automatically. An official application is mandatory for all qualifying households **each year**, including those currently receiving Universal Credit. In addition, **all families currently** in receipt of Free School Meals **must re-apply annually** to maintain their entitlement under the new framework.

Action Required

If you believe your child or children are eligible, please complete the short online application via the Google link attached this email. The deadline for submission is **Friday 26 June 2026**. Upon receipt of your form, the school will liaise with the Local Authority to verify eligibility and formally confirm your child's status.

Benefits of Registration

Registering for Free School Meals provides essential benefits for your child, including:

- Securing ongoing daily school lunches for your child should the London Mayor's Meals Scheme conclude.
- Enabling the school to access critical additional funding to support pupil learning resources.

We strongly encourage all eligible parents and carers to submit an application to ensure your family receives the full scope of available support. Should you have any questions or require assistance with the application process, please contact Carla Hall (finance@ccofoe.uk) in the school office.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Garratty
Headteacher

