



The Collective Community Trust

Collaborative, Innovative, Inclusive

Dear Parents/Carers

We are writing to inform you about important changes to the Free School Meal (FSM) entitlement for the 2026-27 academic year. From September 2026, there will be two new categories of benefits-based Free School Meals:

- **Targeted FSM:** This will remain based on the existing threshold, covering pupils in households receiving Universal Credit with annual household earnings of £7,400 or less.
- **Expanded FSM:** This new category will cover pupils who do not qualify for Targeted FSM but are in households receiving Universal Credit.

Pupils currently entitled to Free School Meals under the benefits-based criteria before this period will continue to receive this entitlement until the end of this academic year. However, from September 2026, transitional protections will end, meaning households must meet the new FSM eligibility criteria to continue receiving Free School Meals.

IMPORTANT ACTION REQUIRED – TO BE COMPLETED BY 1ST JULY

If you currently receive Free School Meals and previously made your application through Bury Council, you will need to reapply via our [new online OFSM system](#). It's a very quick process and only takes a couple of minutes. Alternatively, please provide your school office with your National Insurance (NI) number and consent for school to apply on your behalf.

If you currently receive Free School Meals and made your application through the new online OFSM system, you do not need to reapply. OFSM will recheck eligibility during the summer holidays and you will be notified by email of any change to your entitlement. Please look out for this email (and check junk folder) as it will come directly from OFSM and will determine if you will need to pay for your child's school meals from September.

If you do not currently receive Free School Meals, please apply via the [new online OFSM system](#), even if you believe you are not entitled currently. You may be entitled to receive free school meals if you are in receipt of certain benefits or support. You could also raise additional pupil premium funding for your child's school to fund support like extra tuition, additional teaching staff or after school activities. It's a very quick process and you only need to apply once as the system will automatically update your eligibility if your circumstances change in future. Alternatively, please provide the school office with your NI number and consent for school to apply on your behalf.

Going forward, schools are required to monitor FSM eligibility on an ongoing basis through annual rechecks and this will be done automatically using the OFSM system. Please don't hesitate to reach out to your school office if you need further clarification or support regarding Free School Meals for your child.



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C/o Whitefield Community Primary School
Victoria Avenue, Whitefield
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Chief Executive Officer
Mrs K Macadam



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Thank you for your support as we manage this transition. We appreciate you taking just a couple of minutes to apply as we want to make sure that we are providing your child with the best education and support we can.

Mrs K Macadam
Chief Executive Officer



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