



Willenhall Community Primary School

St. James Lane, Coventry, CV3 3DB HEADTEACHER
Ms Caroline Kiely



Phone 024 76 302 004
Fax 024 76 307 509
Email headteacher@WillenhallPrimary.org
Web www.WillenhallPrimary.org

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Dear Parents

Changes to free school meal eligibility under Universal Credit

The eligibility criteria for free school meals have been changed. This letter explains the changes and how they might affect you.

What are the new eligibility criteria?

Children are entitled to receive free school meals if they or their parents or guardians receive any of the benefits listed below:

- Universal Credit, provided they have an annual net earned income not exceeding £7,400
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190, as assessed by HMRC
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

I don't currently claim free school meals – what does this mean for me?

If you think you might be eligible for free school meals, submit a claim online via www.coventry.gov.uk/applyforfreeschoolmeals or you can obtain a form from the school office. The information you provide will be used to check if you are in receipt of a qualifying benefit and, if you are on Universal Credit, that your earnings do not exceed the threshold. If you claim Universal Credit, your earnings will be assessed from up to three of your last Universal Credit assessment periods.

If you are eligible, your school will be notified. Your child will receive free school meals (if they don't want a school meal they can continue to bring a packed lunch from home) and **the school will receive extra funding**. Thank you.

I am currently claiming free school meals – what does this mean for me?

Most people won't be affected by the new criteria. If you're currently claiming free school meals, but don't meet the new criteria, your child will continue to receive free school meals until the end of the Universal Credit roll-out period. This will apply even if your earnings rise above the new threshold or if you stop being entitled to Universal Credit. The roll-out period is currently scheduled to end in March 2022.

Once Universal Credit is fully rolled out, your child will keep their free school meal until the end of their current phase of education, i.e. primary or secondary.

Where can I get more information?

If you need any further information, please speak to a member of school staff or the local authority. You can also visit the free school meal website: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

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Are you unsure whether your child would enjoy the food on offer?

We try to hold school meal “taster days” and “special meal days” at least once a term to give children chance to try the school meals. Our next special meal day “FA Cup Lunch” will be on Thursday 17th May 2018 and we have already sent a letter home to parents about this.

Don't forget – if your child is eligible for free school meals you don't need to pay for the special meals.

A new menu was launched last week - if you haven't already seen this you will find it on the school website or you can call in to the school office to pick up a paper copy.

We have recently conducted a survey in school to get feedback from the pupils regarding the school meals. We will be reviewing their feedback to see what changes are needed to make the service even better in the future.

All of our meals are freshly prepared on site by trained, friendly and helpful staff. Every school day there is a choice of freshly cooked main meals and desserts, with seasonal salad, seasonal fresh fruit and yoghurts.

Someone else can plan and cook a well-balanced nutritious meal for your child, saving you time in preparing a packed lunch, time you can enjoy with your child.

Children can sit and enjoy their meal with friends in a dining room whilst developing essential social skills that will be valuable throughout their lives.

PLEASE REMEMBER – if you'd like to change your child to school meals, **ensure you inform the school office in advance** as meals are ordered per child on a daily basis.

Don't forget to always keep the school office informed of any changes to your child's dietary requirement and allergies.

Yours sincerely,



Ms Kiely

Head Teacher