

2 July 2026

Dear Parent or Carer,

RE: Free School Meal Eligibility

We want to make sure that we are providing your child with the best education and support we can. Healthy school food can help students establish healthy habits for life and help to improve students' readiness to learn.

The Department of Education has recently announced a change to the eligibility criteria for free school meals, effective from 1 September 2026. They are expanding free school meal eligibility to all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit regardless of household earnings.

Free school meals are available to students in receipt of, or whose parents are in receipt of, one or more of the following benefits:

- Universal Credit
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Households may also be entitled to a free school meal if you:

- Are in receipt of income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Receive the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Meet the criteria set out in separate guidance for families with no resource to public funds (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/free-school-meals-guidance-for-schools-and-local-authorities/providing-free-school-meals-to-families-with-no-recourse-to-public-funds-nrpf>)

To receive free school meals, a parent or carer of a child attending an East Riding of Yorkshire school must apply for this support, and your eligibility has been verified and processed by the Local Authority.

If you do not live in the East Riding and your child attends an East Riding of Yorkshire school, the process remains the same.

What to do

Already in receipt of free school meals?

If you are currently in receipt of free school meals, your eligibility will be rechecked by the Local Authority. If you meet the eligibility criteria, your child will continue to receive free school meals automatically.

If you do not meet the eligibility criteria, you will be notified by the Local Authority that your child will no longer be entitled to a free school meal after 31 August 2026.

Think you may be eligible?

If you believe you may be entitled to receive free school meals, please use this link to access more information about eligibility and also how to apply:
<https://www.eastriding.gov.uk/learning/schools-colleges-and-academies/school-meals/free-school-meals/>

The Local Authority will send you a text message or email if your claim is successful. Please ensure you inform your school so they can make the appropriate arrangements.

All free school meal eligibility claims will be rechecked annually to assess whether you continue to be eligible for free school meals. You should contact the Local Authority if you have a change in financial circumstances.

Should you have any questions, please contact the East Riding of Yorkshire Council Benefits team on tel. 01482 394799.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CHogben'.

Mrs C Hogben
Pupil Premium Lead