

This service is available for Academies, Other schools and settings and Maintained schools

Description:

Eligibility checking for free school meals.

Universal Credit (UC) is a benefit for people of working age on a low income, administered by the Department for Work and Pensions.

Parents earning under the threshold and receiving UC are eligible for FSM.

Year Financial year 2024/25

Benefits

- The council has a dedicated pupil support team and access to an online database system for eligibility checking for benefit-related free school meals.
- The Council's system is directly linked to the DWP and HMRC databases and eligibility status is refreshed weekly allowing changes in household circumstances to be picked up in real time.
- Schools can view pupil information on free school meal eligibility. This service offers schools an efficient and accurate way of assessing eligibility which is directly linked to pupil premium allocations.

Office hours:

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

Service directors:

Tamara Quinn

More detailed information:

Universal Credit is a benefit for people of working age on a low income. It's a single monthly payment which will replace the following benefits with a few exceptions:

- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Working Tax Credit

Eligibility

Parents earning under the threshold of £7,400 per household and receiving [Universal Credit](#) are eligible for benefit-related FSM.

Parents earning above the threshold will not be eligible for FSM.

Protected pupils

Existing recipients of FSM do not lose entitlement and will be protected until **31 March 2025**.

- Any pupil gaining eligibility for FSM during the rollout of Universal Credit will keep their eligibility until 31 March 2025
- After 31 March 2025 any pupil losing eligibility will continue to be transitionally protected until the end of their current phase of education, example primary/secondary
- Schools should flag pupils as "protected pupils" in their management information systems as this will be needed for school data collections.

All protected pupils will be identified on schools' free school meals list. Due to the transitional protection, eligibility for FSM is pupil based and not family based, and you may have cases of one sibling entitled to transitional protected FSM and the other not.

Related content:

[Catering and food](#)

Provider:

Pupil support, children and adults' services.

Contact:

- **Lynda Daly**, Pupil support services: ldaly@ealing.gov.uk 020 8825 6477

Additional contact information

Service number: 020 8825 5566

Further details:

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- [No](#)

Last updated: 03 Sep 2024