

Free School Meals update for all schools

Dear Colleagues,

Further to messaging sent out in May, we are now able to confirm the next steps for all schools in Warwickshire with regards to the upcoming national changes to Free School Meals, as per the DfE guidance - [Free school meals: guidance for local authorities, local-authority-maintained schools, academies and free schools - GOV.UK](#)

For maintained schools, and any academies who have/ will be subscribing to our WES Free School Meals offer (please contact wesgeneral@warwickshire.gov.uk if you have any queries about your subscription status):

- We will re-check all currently eligible children at your school (from nursery age to end of Year 11)/ that are due to attend your school in September
- You can tell the parent/carers of these children that they do not need to do anything – we will simply contact them with the outcome of the check, or if we need anymore information from them to verify their eligibility
- We are going to begin this process on the week commencing the 20th July and aim to have this done by the beginning of August, dependent on system functionality
- Children's eligibility status will be updated in SAM ([Sign In - Synergy](#)) as we work through the checks, but they will be done in batches
- Depending on how the system works, you may not receive the email notifications like you normally would when a child becomes eligible (but we will ensure this is working again when we start processing new applications in August), or, you may get multiple letters for the same children; we are still testing this process but did not want to delay in sending this message out until we have a confirmed answer. The best thing to do is just check SAM in August and you will hopefully have a finalised list of all the current pupils at your school with their new eligibility status
- For families with children who have never had FSM before and are going to become eligible under the new criteria, we will accept applications via our website ([Apply for free school meals: Apply for free school meals \(FSM\) - Warwickshire County Council](#)) from the beginning of August

For academies who have opted not to subscribe to our service (if you have not yet subscribed and wish to do so, please contact wesgeneral@warwickshire.gov.uk as soon as possible):

- You are responsible for re-checking any children currently eligible at your school
- You will need your own application process and a way to assess eligibility for FSM
- You will no longer have access to our SAM database to tell you in live time which children at your school are eligible or not, so you will need your own way of storing and updating this information
- Parent/ carers will be advised to contact yourselves about anything related to FSM

Our webpages have now been updated to reflect all of this information - [Apply for free school meals: Apply for free school meals \(FSM\) - Warwickshire County Council](#)

A special edition newsletter has also gone out to anyone who subscribes to our newsletter. Please feel free to send this link on in any communications you are sending out to your families and encourage them to sign up to the FIS newsletter for future updates - [Welcome to a special edition Family Information Service Newsletter - Thursday 2 July 2026](#) (sign up link is at the bottom of the newsletter)

If there is anything you wish to discuss further, please contact us on 01926742274 or freemeals@warwickshire.gov.uk

Kind Regards,

Warwickshire Family Information Service Free School Meals team

biltonschool@stowevalley.com, admin2014@stowevalley.com,
kinetonhighschool@stowevalley.com, oakleyschool@stowevalley.com