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@YewTreeSandwell



Monday 14th September 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

You will be aware, from previous communications, that the Department for Education (DfE) changed the eligibility criteria/funding arrangements for Free School Meals (FSM) from this September. This now means that all eligibility has to be re-checked each year and that the outcomes of these checks then organise children into one of the following groups (which is communicated to schools from the Local Authority):

Targeted	Children from households in receipt of Universal Credit with annual household earnings of £7,400 or less
Expanded	Children from households in receipt of Universal Credit, with annual household earnings exceeding £7,400
Not eligible	Children from households where they do not meet any of the eligibility criteria

NB: further information about FSM eligibility, and the process for applying is available on our website: <https://www.yewtreeprimary.co.uk/school-meals>

Under the previous arrangements, when children were eligible for FSM, they attracted additional funding for the school called Pupil Premium. However, now there are two eligibility categories to achieve a free school meal, the pupil premium arrangements have changed and schools will only receive pupil premium funding for those who are in the 'targeted' category.

I appreciate this may sound complex (and trust me, when I say, that it certainly has made things more complicated for schools too) but, for parents/carers, you simply need to apply to the Local Authority if you think your child is eligible and we will do the rest!

Beyond actually receiving a free meal, the pupil premium funding has enabled school to support eligible children in lots of different ways. In addition to supporting their academic development, we have also been able to subsidise residentials, school trips and other enrichment activities (as you can see in our Pupil Premium plan on the website [HERE](#)). We have also previously subsidised school milk for children, aged over 5, who attracted this additional funding.

With the changes in FSM eligibility, and the impact on pupil premium funding, please note the following changes which come into effect from **MONDAY 5th OCTOBER**:

- Milk shall remain free for children under 5. If children are over 5, and order school milk through the Cool Milk scheme, we shall **only cover the costs of this if your child is eligible for 'Targeted' FSM**. Therefore, if your child is not eligible at all or receives 'Expanded' FSM then you will need to pay the full cost for your milk from 05.10.26
- Any **subsidies/discounts on trips, residentials etc will only apply to those children who generate pupil premium funding** (i.e. those who are eligible for 'Targeted' FSM or those who were eligible for FSM before the expansion). If you are not sure if your child is eligible for the discount, please speak to the office.

It is with regret that some of our families will no longer receive the subsidies for school milk, trips, residential or other activities. However, I hope you recognise that schools have a finite budget and also have to operate within our means.

Regardless of pupil premium funding and FSM eligibility, I am sure you will appreciate the range of activities and provision which we provide for the children throughout the year. As always, we are grateful for the support of our PTA activities and donations from parents/carers to make this happen.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Barry', enclosed within a large, loopy oval shape.

Mr Jamie Barry
Head Teacher