



**School Admissions & Pupil Benefits**

Service Delivery  
Nottingham City Council  
Loxley House  
Station Street  
Nottingham  
NG2 3NG

[www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk](http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

16<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are writing to let you know about an important change to the way free school meal eligibility is checked.

The Department for Education (DfE) are introducing a new national online system for checking entitlement to free school meals. Nottingham City Council is currently taking part in a pilot of this new service, working alongside a small number of local schools, including your child's school.

To support this pilot and make sure we are fully prepared for upcoming changes to free school meal legislation from September 2026, we are asking parents/carers to make a new application using the DfE website.

We encourage all parents to apply for free school meals, even if your child chooses not to take them.

### **Why is this important?**

- Helps protect your child's entitlement ahead of the September 2026 changes
- By registering, you help the school receive additional pupil premium funding, which is used to support children's learning, wellbeing, and opportunities.
- This extra funding makes a real difference to outcomes for all pupils, so your application can benefit the whole school community.

Regardless of whether your child currently receives free school meals, brings a packed lunch, or you pay for school meals we would request you take the following steps to apply in order to support this system testing and potential increased benefit to your child's school.


Please be assured that there will be no change to your current entitlement as a result of this check. You will not be identified, and the application is done securely through the Department for Education portal and information is only shared with your child's school and the local authority. Applications take less than a few minutes to complete and many families receive an instant decision.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this letter, overleaf you will find a guide on how to make an application. Your support helps us ensure children and schools continue to receive the support they are entitled to.

### **Need Help?**

If you need support with the application process, please contact:

 [pupil.benefits@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:pupil.benefits@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

 0115 841 5568

Thank you for your attention.

### **School Admissions and Pupil Benefits Team**

Service Delivery  
Nottingham City Council

## What do I need to do?

- Go to: [www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/pupilbenefits](http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/pupilbenefits)
- Scroll down to the section that says:  
“If your child attends Berridge Primary, Claremont Primary, Dunkirk Primary, Heathfield Primary or William Booth Primary, please apply via the GOV.UK website using the link below.”
- Click the green link labelled Apply for Free School Meals.
- You will be taken to a GOV.UK page. Read the information, then scroll to the bottom and click Start.
- Search for your child’s school (it must be one of the schools listed above) and click Continue.
- Check that the school name and address are correct, then select Check your eligibility.
- Enter your details (not your child’s): your full name, date of birth, and National Insurance number.
- The system will then check if you qualify for benefits-related free school meals.
- If you are eligible, you will be asked to enter your child’s details next.
- If the system cannot confirm your eligibility, you may be asked to upload evidence, such as a recent Universal Credit statement. If you are unsure what to provide, we are happy to help.