



Glenleigh Park Primary Academy and Nursery

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Dear Glenleigh Park Families

Important Update: Changes to Free School Meal Eligibility from September 2026

We are writing to inform you about important changes to Free School Meal eligibility starting from 1 September 2026. The government is expanding eligibility criteria so that more families across East Sussex can receive vital support.

Please read the details below carefully to see how this affects your family and find out what action you need to take right now.

Replacement Support Following Voucher Scheme Changes

As you know, the Huggs holiday supermarket voucher scheme officially ended this past May. We understand that this loss of direct voucher support impacts many family budgets. However, please be assured that financial help has not gone away. New and expanded support systems are actively available to fill this gap, which is why taking immediate action on the initiatives below is so important.

If You Receive Universal Credit - Apply Now

From 1 September 2026, eligibility rules are expanding. Your child may now qualify for Free School Meals if you are in receipt of Universal Credit.

- **Do not wait until September to apply.** If your child is not currently eligible and you receive Universal Credit, you can submit your application today to ensure everything is set up for the new school year.
- **How to apply:** Visit the [East Sussex County Council Free School Meals Portal](#) to submit an online application.

If Your Child Already Receives Free School Meals

- **You do not need to reapply.** If your child is already entitled to Free School Meals and your circumstances have not changed, you do not need to fill out a new form.
- **Eligibility Reviews:** The local authority will automatically carry out entitlement reviews this month to prepare for the upcoming school year, ensuring eligible children transition smoothly into September. Going forward, eligibility will be checked annually.



Children in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2

All children in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 will continue to receive Universal Infant Free School Meals automatically. However, if your family is on a low income or receives Universal Credit, **we strongly recommend that you still apply**. Submitting a successful application triggers additional funding for our school via the Key Stage 1 Pupil Premium, which provides extra resources to support your child's learning.

Additional Support and Financial Assistance

If your family is facing hardship, multiple support streams are available to help keep children fed and families supported during the holidays and unexpected financial shocks:

- **Crisis and Resilience Fund:** A dedicated fund designed to help local households dealing with a sudden financial shock or severe economic hardship.
- **Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme:** Eligible children can access free, fun holiday activity sessions that include a nutritious meal.
- **Cash for Kids Holiday Hunger Grants:** Community-focused grants targeted at keeping children well-fed during school holiday breaks.

Where to Find Help

If you are worried about making ends meet, please do not struggle alone. You can find comprehensive guidance, support tools, and applications for all of these initiatives by visiting the [East Sussex Cost of Living Support Page](#).

Please submit your new applications as soon as possible to avoid any delays for the new term.

Kind regards.



Ms L Barnard
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