



# POTTEN END C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Church Road, Potten End, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, HP4 2QY

Head Teacher  
Mrs Denise Kennedy

Telephone 01442 865022  
e-mail: [admin@pottenend.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@pottenend.herts.sch.uk)  
[www.pottenend.herts.sch.uk](http://www.pottenend.herts.sch.uk)

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## Changes to Free School Meals from September 2026 - Please Apply Now

Dear Parents and Carers

We are writing to inform you about an important change to Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility for families receiving Universal Credit that will come into effect from **September 2026**.

The Government has announced that from September 2026, all children whose families receive **Universal Credit** will be eligible for Free School Meals, regardless of household earnings. This change is expected to help many more families access valuable support and ensure that children receive a healthy meal during the school day.

While this is welcome news, it is important that families **apply for Free School Meals as soon as they become eligible**, rather than waiting until September 2026.

### Who should apply?

Applications can now be made, and we encourage all parents and carers who receive **Universal Credit** or other qualifying benefits to check their eligibility and apply, even if they have applied before and been refused. We recommend you do this before end of term in July to ensure you can access this at the start of the new academic year.

*Children who already receive Free School Meals **do not** need to reapply unless contacted by the school or local authority.*

**All children can receive a free lunch if in Reception class, Year 1 or Year 2, which is called Universal Free School Meals.** However, if your child is in these classes and registers through the link below your school could get extra funding called 'Pupil Premium' to pay for additional staff time, extra computers, and trips for students.

### How do I apply?

To apply please visit:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/at-school/free-school-meals/free-school-meals.aspx>

If you are unsure whether you are eligible, we strongly encourage you to apply. The process takes no more than 5 minutes, is confidential and could unlock valuable support for your child and the school.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



DENISE KENNEDY  
Head Teacher

