St Finbar's Catholic Primary School

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In God's love we learn and grow together

Headteacher: Mrs J P Conley



ST FINBAR'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM)

A Simple Guide for Parents and Carers



Already Receiving Universal Credit?

Apply for Free School Meals Today - Many families do not realise they may now qualify for Free School Meals.

- The application is free
- It only takes a few minutes
- Your child could receive a free school meal every school day
- It may help the school identify additional support your child could benefit from.

Even if your child is in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 and already receives a free meal, we strongly encourage you to apply if you receive Universal Credit or another qualifying benefit.

Why Should I Apply?

Applying for Free School Meals may provide:

- Benefits for Your Child
- A free, healthy school meal every day
- Identification for support schemes linked to FSM eligibility (where applicable)
- Access to certain programmes available to eligible families
- Reduced financial pressure on household food costs
- Benefits for St Finbar's

Some eligible pupils may attract additional Government funding which helps schools provide:

- Additional teaching support
- Intervention programmes
- Educational resources
- Wellbeing and pastoral support
- Wider enrichment opportunities

This funding can make a real difference to children across our school community.

What Has Changed?

From September 2026, all children living in households that receive Universal Credit may be eligible for Free School Meals, but parents must still submit an application.

There are now two types of Free School Meals:

Targeted FSM

Children receive:

- Free school meals
- Pupil Premium funding for the school
- Access to linked support programmes where available

Expanded FSM

Children receive:

- Free school meals

However, Expanded FSM does not attract Pupil Premium funding.

Do I Need to Apply Every Year?

Usually, no.

However, eligibility is now based on your current circumstances. Liverpool City Council may carry out checks or ask for updated information in the future.

If:

- your circumstances change,
- you start receiving Universal Credit,
- you stop receiving benefits,
- Liverpool City Council contacts you,

you should respond promptly and update your information as requested.

HOW TO APPLY

Before You Start, you will need:

- An email address
- A National Insurance Number (or NASS Number if applicable)
- Your child's details
- A Liverpool Citizen Portal account

Step 1 - Access the Liverpool Citizen Portal

- Visit: The LCC Free Schools Meals Page: https://liverpool.gov.uk/benefits/free-school-meals/
- Apply for Free School Meals
- If you already have a Citizen Portal account, log in.
- If not, select Register an Account and follow the instructions.

Step 2 - Check Your Child Is Listed

- Open My Family
- Check your child is shown
- If not, select Add Child
- Enter the required information and save it

Step 3 - Start Your Application

- Select Free School Meals
- Click Apply
- Read the information provided
- Select Continue

Step 4 - Complete the Application

You will be asked to provide:

- Your details
- Your child's details
- Your National Insurance or NASS Number

Please check all information carefully before continuing.

Step 5 - Select Your Child

- Tick the child you are applying for.
- If you have more than one child, a separate application must be completed for each child.

Step 6 - Review and Submit

- Review your application
- Accept the declaration
- Submit the application
- Make a note of your reference number
- Click Finish

You should then receive an email confirming that your application has been submitted.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: My child already gets free meals in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2. Should I still apply?

A: Yes. Children in infant classes receive Universal Infant Free School Meals, but eligible families should still apply for benefits-related Free School Meals.

Q: I have never been eligible before. Should I check again?

A: Yes. Eligibility rules changed from September 2026 and many more families may now qualify.

Q: Who can help me complete the application?

A: The school office will be happy to help if you need support completing the online form.

Need Help?

We will be running a series of drop-in sessions:

Wednesday 25 November – 2:00pm and Friday 17 November – 12:00pm

If you would like to attend one of these sessions, please let the School office know via email and ensure you are able to access your Citizen Portal account

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