



Shaping Futures: Together
we learn, care and grow

Ashwell Primary School

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Friday 23rd October 2026

IMPORTANT Financial Updates – 2026

Dear Parents,

As I am sure you will all be aware, the recent economic climate is likely to have impacted everyone in one way or another. As a school, we are conscious of this and constantly reviewing all activities and expectations where there is a cost to parents (Uniform, trips etc). Alongside this, we have also recently undertaken a review of our existing support mechanisms that are in place to support parents with these costs. This has been necessary as a result of recent Government changes to Free School Meal Eligibility.

I am now writing to all parents to outline some key changes that we are making as a result of the changes in order to continue to support parents as far as we can. These changes have already been agreed and are in place as of 1st September 2026 (the beginning of the 2025-26 academic year).

In addition to this, I seek to ensure that all parents are fully aware of the support available to them through Government funding and how parents can play their part in ensuring the school better funded as a result which will in turn benefit **ALL** children. Please do take a moment to read the information on the following pages regarding Free School Meal Eligibility and Pupil Premium funding. If eligible, and not registered, you could really make a huge difference to support us.

What are we doing to further support families?

Previously	From 1 st September 2026
Curriculum Enrichment Trips - All children in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) will automatically have the full cost of all day trips covered by Pupil Premium Funding. - Parents with children NOT in receipt of Free School Meals asked for voluntary contribution and parents requiring support invited to submit remission request for financial support.	Curriculum Enrichment Trips - All children in receipt of TARGETED Free School Meals (FSM) will automatically have the full cost of all day trips covered by Pupil Premium Funding. - Parents with children NOT in receipt of Free School Meals OR eligible for EXPANDED Free School Meals are asked for voluntary contribution. - Parents requiring support invited to submit remission request for financial support.
Swimming (Year 4) - All children in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) will automatically have the full cost of swimming covered by Pupil Premium Funding. - Parents with children NOT in receipt of Free School Meals asked for voluntary contribution	Swimming (Year 4) All children in receipt of TARGETED Free School Meals (FSM) will automatically automatically have the full cost of swimming covered by Pupil Premium Funding.



and parents requiring support invited to submit remission request for financial support.	- Parents with children NOT in receipt of Free School Meals <u>OR</u> eligible for EXPANDED Free School Meals are asked for voluntary contribution. - Parents requiring support invited to submit remission request for financial support.
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Previously	From 1 st September 2026
Residential Trips (Year 4-6) - All children to benefit from an increased Henry Colbron subsidy to reduce the cost of residential trips (approx. 20% of residential total) - Children in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) will automatically receive the following funding: 30% Pupil Premium funded 30% additional Henry Colbron funded - Any additional grants the school is able to secure - Parents with children NOT in receipt of Free School Meals asked to pay cost of residential visits. If support is required, parents invited to submit remission request	Residential Trips (Year 4-6) - All children to benefit from an increased Henry Colbron subsidy to reduce the cost of residential trips (approx. 20% of residential total) - Children in receipt of TARGETED Free School Meals (FSM) will automatically receive the following funding: 30% Pupil Premium funded 30% additional Henry Colbron funded - Any additional grants the school is able to secure - Parents with children NOT in receipt of TARGETED Free School Meals asked to pay cost of residential visits. - If support is required parents invited to submit remission request.
Extra-Curriculum Clubs All children in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) are offered one funded block of extra-curricular clubs per term.	Extra-Curriculum Clubs – No Change All children in receipt of TARGETED Free School Meals (FSM) are offered one funded block of extra-curricular clubs per term.
School Uniform - Our PTA now run a well-stocked, exceptionally good value preloved uniform shop that is accessible to all families. - All children in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) may request support towards the cost of school uniform	School Uniform – No Change - Our PTA continue to run a well-stocked, preloved uniform shop <u>only requesting a donation if parents are able to</u>, making it even more accessible to all families. - All children in receipt of TARGETED Free School Meals (FSM) may request support towards the cost of school uniform.
Additional Support – If eligible for FSM No Change - Access to Free School Meals (daily) - Access to free milk (daily) - Food vouchers provision (In-line with HCC Household Support Fund guidance) - Access to Holiday Clubs (In-line with HCC Holiday Activity and Food Programme guidance) - Music Tuition funding (via Herts Music Service)	Additional Support – If eligible for TARGETED FSM - Access to Free School Meals (daily) - Access to free milk (daily) - Food vouchers provision (In-line with HCC Household Support Fund guidance) - Access to Holiday Clubs (In-line with HCC Holiday Activity and Food Programme guidance) - Music Tuition funding (via Herts Music Service)

At Ashwell School we remain committed to providing ALL children with an extensive range of opportunities through both Curriculum Enrichment and Extra-Curricular activities.



**HAVE YOU CHECKED YOU ARE GETTING WHAT YOU ARE ENTITLED TOO?
ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR TARGETED OR EXPANDED FREE SCHOOL MEALS?**

CAN YOU HELP MAKE SURE WE ARE FULLY FUNDED?

Universal Infant Free School Meals Eligibility

Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2

Your child is eligible for universal infant free school meals if they are in either Reception, Year 1 or Year 2.

School milk in Reception, year 1 and year 2 - schools provide free milk for all children, up until their 5th birthday. If it's during the term, they won't get free milk from that term onwards. After that, children who qualify for **TARGETED** Free School Meals can continue to get free milk. Contact your school for more information.

Please note: If you also get any of the qualifying benefits below, please make sure that you register as we receive additional funding for this. Registering your child in Reception – Year 2 not only ensures they will receive a free healthy meal every lunchtime, it also raises an additional funding for the school from the government. This money is used by the school to offer pupils invaluable additional support as outlined in the school's table on the previous page.

Have you registered your child if you are eligible?

Children in Reception – Year 2: [Register Here](#)

Children in Year 3 – 6 (also Nursery!)

Your child can get a free school meal if you receive any of the following:

- Universal Credit
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Pupils eligible under the *no recourse to public funds* criteria can also get a free school meal.

Schools receive additional funding and the pupil may be entitled to other benefits.

If you receive Universal Credit but your household income is more than £7,400, your child can get a free school meal only.

Apply today if you receive any of these benefits. It takes 5 mins and, in most cases, we can tell you straightaway if your child can get free meals at school. [Apply Here](#)

School milk in year 3 or above

Children entitled to **TARGETED** free school meals can also get free milk. Contact the office for more information.

**KEY MESSAGE: IS YOUR CHILD ELIGIBLE FOR TARGETED
OR EXPANDED FREE SCHOOL MEALS**



Could your child be eligible for Free School Meals?

A simple guide for parents and carers

START HERE

Does your household receive any of the qualifying benefits? (e.g. Universal Credit, Income Support, Pension Credit, etc.)

YES

Are your annual net household earnings £7,400 or less?

YES

TARGETED FSM

- Free Meal
- Pupil Premium
- Holiday Club
- School Travel Assistance

NO

EXPANDED FSM

- Free Meal (Meals only; no extra funding/perks).

NO

Is your child in Reception, Year 1, or Year 2?

YES

UNIVERSAL INFANT FSM

- Free Meal (Automatic; but you should still register if on benefits).

NO

NOT ELIGIBLE

- You must pay for school meals.



Did You Know?

Pupil Premium Funding

Pupil premium funding is sent directly to the school, and its main focus is to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils of all abilities and help them reach their potential.

Children who are eligible for **TARGETED** Free School Meal, also qualify for Pupil Premium Funding. If you register, Ashwell School gets extra funding to pay for additional staff hours, resources, books and trips etc.

Pupil premium funding **is not a personal budget** for individual pupils, and the funding will be used to improve teaching quality to achieve the best outcomes for **all pupils**.

The school has a number of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding; however, we understand that all pupils face unique challenges and, therefore, the funding will not only be used for the benefit of eligible pupils. Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, however, will be prioritised.

The school intends to ensure pupil premium can be used to address the following areas:

- High-quality teaching, e.g. by investing in staff development.
- Targeted academic support
- Non-academic barriers to success, e.g. attendance, behaviour, and social and emotional support



Accessing further information

Parents are more than welcome to contact the school if they would like to talk in confidence about their child's eligibility for the Free School Meals / Pupil Premium or how we use this funding. Mrs Bowen, our School Business Manager can help you if you have any questions. You can contact her via the school office or admin@ashwell.herts.sch.uk

Thank you for your support and for helping to make sure the school receives as much funding as possible to give every pupil the support and education they deserve.

Yours sincerely,

Mr S England
Headteacher