St Gabriel the Archangel
Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

Painsley Catholic College
Principal: Mrs R Waugh - BA (Hons), PGCE
Station Road, Cheadle, Staffordshire, ST10 1LH
Telephone: 01538 493777
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Wednesday, 24 June 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

ELIGIBILITY FOR EXTRA FUNDING - PUPIL PREMIUM & FREE SCHOOL MEALS

I am writing to provide you with information regarding the possibility of extra funding for your child though Pupil Premium, as well as updates on the eligibility for Free school meals. The government have recently clarified how this can be claimed for the academic year 2026/27.

If you receive benefits you may be entitled to receive "targeted" free school meals (up to a cost of £505 per year). School meals are a good way to make sure your child has a healthy meal every day. By eating well at lunchtime, children can remain focussed on their learning. With the potential of additional pupil premium funding (up to £1,100 per year) for your child's school to fund support like extra tuition, additional teaching staff or after school activities.

Even if you don't wish to claim for free school meals you can register, so that the school can claim the extra funding available for your child to support their education.

How does it work?
1. Check if you qualify -please look at the list overleaf for how you can claim this currently for 2026/27.

2. Registering is really quick and easy.

You can apply directly to the Local Authority online using the following link;

Apply for Free School Meals - Staffordshire County Council

If you are having difficulties in applying for Free School Meals, please contact office@painsley.staffs.sch.uk or call 01538 493777.

Alternatively contact - Staffordshire County Council – general enquires 0300 111 8000.

3. If you want your child to have a free, healthy school meal at lunchtime this could save you £505 a year and the school may receive £1,100 extra to support your child's education.

4. If you don't want your child to have school meals, you could still register your child and the school may still get £1,100 extra to support your child's education.

From the start of the 2026 to 2027 academic year, FSM eligibility is being expanded to all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit, regardless of household earnings. This is called "expanded" free school meals and does not attract additional funds for schools.

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Please note that this information is confidential and it will not affect any other benefits you are claiming.

WHO CAN APPLY FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS?

The government have announced changes to the entitlement for free school meals from September 2026.

From then, there will be two different types of free school meals, known as "targeted" and "expanded"

Families who receive any of the following are eligible for "targeted" free school meals –

- Universal Credit with annual household earnings of £7,400 or less
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999- see additional criteria families with no recourse to public funds
- Are in receipt of income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Receive the guarantee element of Pension Credit

Targeted free school meals will attract £1,100 of pupil premium funding to support extra tuition, additional teaching staff or after school activities

Families in receipt of Universal Credit, with annual household earnings exceeding £7,400 will be entitled to "expanded" free school meals. This means free school meals only.

Further information about Free School Meals can be obtained from Admissions or Accounts staff at school or from the local authority. The contact details for the local authority are as follows:

Local Authority Website link;
Free school meals | Staffordshire County Council
www.staffordshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/financial-support-school/free-school-meals

School Telephone: 01538 493777 School website link: www.painsley.co.uk

From the start of the 2026/27 academic year, households must meet the eligibility criteria to be entitled to free school meals and there will be a rechecking of eligibility that will take place once per year by schools and local authorities. There is no need to reapply as eligibility will be automatically rechecked by the local authority who will contact you if your eligibility has changed.

Please help us to claim the money that the government has made available to support your child. If you would like further information or support on how to claim or how the changes planned by the government might affect you please do not hesitate in contacting the school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs R Waugh
Principal