

### **Free School Meals Voucher Update**

May 2026

Dear Parent / Carer:

We write to you today to update you on the free school meals voucher initiative. The initiative was started in 2020 to help families during an extraordinary time (COVID-19 lockdown). Free school meal vouchers were never intended to be a permanent or long-term initiative that was started by central government.

The funding for free school meals that was being made available to the local authority was due to end, at the end of March 2026. The Free School Meals funding body have announced they intend to extend this to the end of August 2026.

This means that benefit related free school meals vouchers will be made available to parents of eligible children during the school holidays that fall between the period **01/04/2026 to 31/08/2026**. Although the funding body have made the announcement, we have not yet received any funds for the voucher scheme.

**We apologise for the delay in getting the vouchers distributed to families of children who are entitled to the FSM vouchers. We are still awaiting the funds to be made available to us. This is a top priority for us.**

Due to the reduced grant amount that we have been allocated this time, we will be retrospectively offering **£20 for the Easter Holiday period**. We will not be able to offer any vouchers for the May half term holiday school break. We will review the amount we can offer for the Summer Holidays closer to the Summer Holidays. We will be offering the maximum amount we can for each holiday period.

The Summer Holidays free school meal vouchers will be the last FSM food vouchers offered under this scheme. It has been announced by the funding agency there will be no further funding available for this initiative.

Due to funding constraints, we will not be offering any vouchers to 6<sup>th</sup> formers for any of the school holidays.

Slough Borough Council is committed to supporting and helping all our families. If you are facing financial difficulty, please call our customer services team on 01753 475111 who will be able to advise you of any additional help available in your circumstances.

Yours sincerely

FSM Administration