



**THE HART  
SCHOOL**  
*Creative  
Education  
Trust*

ACE/SHN/RSA

11 September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

### **Free School Meals (FSM) and Breakfast Club**

At The Hart School, we are committed to ensuring that every student is well supported and able to access the opportunities available to them. We would like to make parents and carers aware of recent changes to Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility and encourage any family who may qualify to apply.

#### **Changes to Free School Meals from September 2026**

The Department for Education has expanded Free School Meal eligibility. From September 2026, all children from households receiving Universal Credit may be eligible for a free school meal.

There are now two categories of Free School Meals:

#### **Targeted Free School Meals**

Students are eligible for Targeted FSM if their family meets the existing qualifying benefits criteria, including households receiving Universal Credit with annual earnings of £7,400 or less. Students eligible for Targeted FSM attract additional funding for the school, which helps us provide a range of support and opportunities.

#### **Expanded Free School Meals**

Students in households receiving Universal Credit who do not meet the Targeted FSM earnings threshold may still qualify for a free school meal under the Expanded FSM scheme.

Whilst Expanded FSM provides access to a free school lunch, it does not provide eligibility for additional funding streams linked to Targeted FSM.

#### **Additional School Support**

The Hart School uses funding associated with Targeted FSM to help remove barriers to education and enhance opportunities for students. Eligible students may receive support towards:

- Educational visits and trips
- Curriculum enrichment activities
- Revision resources and learning materials

Please note that this additional support is available to students who qualify for Targeted FSM and does not apply to students who qualify solely under the Expanded FSM category.



### **Making the Most of Your Child's Entitlement**

We recognise that some students who are eligible for Free School Meals do not regularly use their lunch allocation. To ensure families are aware of the support available, we will be contacting parents and carers of eligible students who are not making full use of their entitlement towards later this month so that you are made aware. Our aim is to ensure that students benefit from the support available to them and have access to a nutritious meal during the school day.

### **The Hart School Breakfast Club**

A good breakfast helps students start the day positively, improving concentration, energy levels and readiness to learn.

To support all students, The Hart School offers a free Breakfast Club every morning from 8:00am to 8:25am, available to all students regardless of Free School Meal eligibility.

Students who eat breakfast are often better able to concentrate in lessons, maintain their energy levels throughout the morning and arrive ready to engage with learning. Our Breakfast Club provides a welcoming environment that helps students make a positive start to the school day.

### **Applying for Free School Meals**

Applications are made through Staffordshire County Council:

[Applying for free school meals | Free school meals | Staffordshire County Council](#)

You will need:

- Your National Insurance number (or NASS number)
- Basic details about your child and household

If you cannot apply online, call 0300 111 8007 then select option 3 followed by option 2.

Frequently asked questions can be found here:

[Frequently asked questions - Free school meals | Free school meals | Staffordshire County Council](#)

If you require any further guidance, please contact Staffordshire County Council using the number provided.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs A Cleary  
Assistant Principal