**Dear families,**

**Re: Free School Meals – Information for New Families**

Welcome to Loxwood Primary School! We are delighted that your child will be joining us and look forward to working together to support their journey through primary school.

As part of our commitment to supporting families, we would like to share some information about **Free School Meals (FSM)** and how you can check if your child is eligible.

**Universal Infant Free School Meals**

All children in **Reception, Year 1 and Year 2** are entitled to a **free school meal every day**, regardless of household income. You do not need to apply for this—your child will automatically be included.

**Income-Based Free School Meals**

In addition to the universal offer, your child may be eligible for **income-based Free School Meals** if you receive certain benefits. If eligible, your child will continue to receive free meals **beyond Year 2**, and the school will also receive additional funding (Pupil Premium) to support their learning.

You may be eligible if you receive:

* Income Support
* Income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance
* Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
* Universal Credit (with household income below a certain threshold)
* Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
* The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
* Child Tax Credit (with no Working Tax Credit and an income below £16,190)

**How to Apply**

You can check your eligibility and apply online via the **West Sussex County Council** portal:  
🔗 <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/free-school-meals/>

The application is quick and confidential, and we are happy to help if you need support completing it.

**Why it’s important**

Even if your child is in Reception, Year 1, or Year 2 and receiving Universal Free School Meals, we strongly encourage families who meet the criteria to apply. This ensures your child continues to receive free meals **after Year 2**, and it provides our school with extra funding to enhance learning resources, offer additional support, and fund enrichment activities.

If you have any questions or need help with the process, please don’t hesitate to contact the school office.

We look forward to welcoming you and your child to our school community!

Warm regards,

**Mrs Sharon Mellors**