

5<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Dear Parents and carers

## School meal prices from September 2025

We are writing to inform you of the increase to school meals at Dobcroft Junior School from **£2.60 to £2.95 from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025**. This increase will seem significant and the reasons why this has come about are outlined below.

**2024-2025 school meals cost £2.60 to parents, but £2.80 to school.** This is because in July 2024 there was a consultation between Sheffield Local Authority and its schools regarding whether schools were happy to subsidise the 20p rise (to £2.80). The consultation outcome was that Sheffield schools would subsidise the 20p rise and not pass it on to parents- thus the charge for school meals remained £2.60.

**In September 2025 the cost of School meals is going up by another 15p to £2.95.** The local authority has asked schools to decide if they wish to continue to subsidise the increase (alongside last year's increase) or to charge the amount to parents. Our governing board has decided that school is unable to subsidise the increase and therefore the cost of a school meal from **September 2025 will be £2.95.**

## Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility and transitional protection from September 2026

From the start of the 2026/27 school year, the Department for Education will extend entitlement to FSM to include all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit. Parents on Universal Credit will be eligible regardless of their income. Currently, their household must earn less than £7,400 a year to qualify. It is their intention to end transitional protection alongside this change in threshold, with eligibility for all pupils reverting to whether they meet the eligibility criteria, regardless of whether they were previously protected.

Area	Until July 2026	From September 2026
<b>Who is eligible</b>	Children in families on Universal Credit earning under £7,400/year	All children in families on Universal Credit, regardless of income
<b>Transitional protection</b>	Still in place – children keep FSM even if income rises	Ends – families must meet new eligibility criteria
<b>Settings covered</b>	Schools, school-based nurseries, further education settings	No change – same settings covered
<b>Income checks</b>	No rechecking required (e.g. for Y6 moving to Y7)	Eligibility will be based on new criteria (further DfE guidance expected)
<b>Funding</b>	Existing arrangements	New entitlement will be fully funded by DfE

If you have any queries or think you may be eligible for FSM, please contact the school office or the Sheffield City Council FSM team on 0114 2734567 (option 4, option 3), [Schoolfood@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:Schoolfood@sheffield.gov.uk).

Many thanks,

Nicola Sexton  
Head Teacher  
Dobcroft Junior School