

Cambridgeshire Holiday Voucher Scheme (CHVS)

- To: Children and Young People Committee
- Meeting Date: 12th March 2024
- From: Executive Director: Children, Education and Families
- Electoral division(s): All
- Key decision: Yes
- Forward Plan ref: KD2024/034
- Executive Summary: The Children and Young People Committee is being asked to agree the funding, procurement process and allocation basis for the new Cambridgeshire Holiday Voucher Scheme (CHVS)
- Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:
- a) Agree the scope and operation of the Cambridgeshire Holiday Voucher Scheme (CHVS)
 - b) Agree to utilise up to £3m earmarked for this purpose by Full Council in order to fund the CHVS during 2024/25, subject to any government announcement on available national funding.
 - c) Delegate responsibility for awarding and executing a contract for the provision of the holiday vouchers starting from 1st April 2024 and extension periods to the Executive Director: Children, Education and Families, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Children and Young People Committee.
- Voting arrangements: Co-opted members of the Committee are eligible to vote on this report.

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1. Creating a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire

1.1 The proposal for the voucher scheme supports the following strategic objectives –

- Ambition 3 - Health inequalities are reduced
- Ambition 4 – People enjoy healthy, safe, and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs
- Ambition 5 – People are helped out of poverty and income inequality
- Ambition 7 - Children and young people have opportunities to thrive

2. Background

2.1 Since December 2020, the Council has operated a voucher scheme to support parents on low incomes with the cost of providing lunch during the school holidays. Over 400,000 vouchers have been allocated during this time for in excess of £10m. This has supported parents during Covid-19 and in the cost-of-living crisis. This has been funded by a number of sources including council reserves, the Winter Support Grant, LA Covid-19 Support Grant and 3 rounds of the Household Support Fund (HSF). This current round of the HSF grant comes to an end on 31st March 2024. At the time of this report, there is no announcement of further government funding to extend the scheme.

2.2 As part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, the County Council voted to earmark £3m annually of funding to continue the current level of support to eligible families for lunch costs during school holidays for the next 5 years. This paper seeks to outline how a voucher scheme would be delivered for the 2024/25 financial year.

2.3 In October 2023, we undertook a review of this scheme asking for feedback from parents and carers. Information on this is included in the report.

3. Delivering the Cambridgeshire Holiday Voucher Scheme

3.1 We have successfully operated a direct voucher scheme for parents for the holiday periods from December 2020. We have used an online system called Wonde to allocate vouchers with parents receiving vouchers by text and email. We use data held by schools and settings to identify eligible children.

3.2 In the October 2023 round of the holiday voucher scheme, the following number of vouchers have been claimed or allocated –

	Number of Vouchers Claimed During October Half Term (voucher value - £15 per eligible child)
Schools	18,600
Early Years	1,705
College Students	961
Other – children not on a school roll, Electively Home Education (EHE) or independent school	254
Total	21,520

For college students, we provide funding and the money is allocated to students directly in line with other bursary / free school meal schemes they operate.

- 3.3 We have seen a large increase in the number of eligible families with numbers increasing by 20% since October 2021 which we believe demonstrates the challenges our families face within the current economic context. Around 8.75% of the vouchers sent in the October 2023 scheme were unclaimed. All parents were emailed and/or sent a text to remind them to claim and we encouraged schools to follow up any unclaimed vouchers. This number has reduced over time and is normally higher in half term than in the longer, higher value holidays. We continue to publicise the scheme widely using a number of communication channels including via letters, newsletters, media press releases and social media.

Affordability of the Scheme

- 3.4 The 2023-24 scheme has cost around £4m to operate. This cost was met by the Household Support Fund and a contribution from reserves (which supported the wider support scheme as well). The agreement of Full Council to allocate £3m in 2024/25 means there needs to be a reduction in the value of this support in each holiday. Feedback from parents suggest the longer holidays are more challenging so we have kept this rate higher. It is proposed that the rates below are allocated for the 2024-25 year -

Holiday Period	Voucher value (per eligible child) 2023-24	Voucher value (per eligible child) 2024-25
Easter	£30	£25
May Half Term	£15	£10
Summer	£75	£50
October Half Term	£15	£10
Christmas	£30	£30
February Half Term	£15	£10
Total	£180	£135

- 3.5 The cost of administering the scheme is around £50,000 per year, 1.7% of the total grant. We receive a lot of queries from parents around eligibility etc. We provide support 7 days a week during the period of voucher allocation using staff who have existing roles within the council. Since the scheme began, we have received nearly 36,000 emails from parents, schools and settings. We have also provided advice for applying for free school meals to many thousands of families.
- 3.6 We have assumed a level of growth in numbers and will retain a small contingency to deal with changes in numbers (early years take up is challenging to predict). If eligibility increases in-year, there may be a requirement to review these rates.

Eligibility

- 3.7 For the CHVS, it is proposed we will continue to use the same eligibility criteria we used for the Household Support Grant. A supermarket voucher will be allocated to parents/carers whose child/ren meet the following criteria –
- Funded Childcare and Education for 2-year-olds under the income-based criteria (children aged 2)
 - Early Years Pupil Premium under the income-based criteria (children aged 3 and 4)
 - Free School Meals (children and young people aged 4 to 16)
 - Students in Sixth Forms eligible for Free School meals or for the 16+ bursary (young people aged 16 to 19).
- 3.8 In previous rounds, we funded all children in our schools regardless of where they live. This scheme will still allocate to all children in Cambridgeshire schools and early years settings. In each round, and in line with the national scheme, we set an upper age limit of up to 19 on the day the vouchers are sent. We allow claims from eligible students up to 25 if they have an education, health and care plan and are accessing education. We propose to keep this criteria in place. We do not fund vouchers for children and young people in foster care as allowances support the holiday period.
- 3.9 It is unlikely any of our neighbouring authorities will provide this type of scheme. As a result of this change, it is proposed that we introduce a new criteria to support those children who have been directed through the admissions process to access their education outside of the county. Practically this only affects children who live in Yaxley where their feeder secondary school is Hampton Gardens (in Peterborough). We have agreed with the Trust who operates Hampton Gardens that data will be shared to allow vouchers to be allocated. There will also be a small number of children who have been directed by admissions to schools outside of the area and these will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. If the Household Support Grant is reinstated, this will be reviewed.
- 3.10 The scheme will run alongside our Holiday Activity and Food Scheme (operating at Easter, Summer and Christmas) and parents can access both schemes.

Procurement of the Voucher Scheme Provider

- 3.11 As in previous rounds, we continue to use the Crown Commercial Services procurement route via RM6248 Payment Solution 2, Lot 3: Vouchers. The rules governing use of the framework agreement are being followed, with submissions from providers being assessed currently. The service area is receiving full support from the Procurement and Commercial Team. The vouchers will be bought at below face value, typically 99p in the £1. It is proposed that a 3-year procurement is undertaken for a total value of £12m to allow for any announcement over the continuation of national funding, if there is a funding announcement. This time period also coincides with the expiry of the procurement framework. A new procurement will be undertaken for later rounds of the scheme and the CYP Committee will be consulted on this process.

Feedback from Parents

- 3.12 In October 2023, Officers wrote to parents to seek feedback on the CHVS. Appendix 1

outlines the 537 responses received to 5 key questions. The majority of respondents said that the voucher scheme had helped them with the cost-of-living crisis and to eat more healthily. There is also feedback that the scheme encouraged parents to apply for free school meals and seek support from the wider support schemes offered by the council. Overall the response was incredibly positive, but it did highlight a few concerns which the Committee may wish to consider -

- Wider eligibility – a number of parents suggested the income threshold was too low or that other criteria should be used, such as disability living allowance. The current criteria for low income is a nationally recorded one and going above this level will be hard to capture or we won't hold the information for certain groups.
- Interlink with the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) scheme – a lot of parents were incredibly positive about the HAF scheme which compliments the voucher scheme. Feedback has been passed to the HAF scheme around availability and choice.
- Limited choices of supermarkets and the availability to use vouchers for online shopping. We have worked hard to increase choice and there are now 11 supermarkets available but there are still gaps including Lidl and Co-op. We continue to push our supplier to offer these. We also have 4 supermarkets which allow vouchers to be used for online shopping to further aid accessibility.
- Concerns around the quality of school meals – a number of parents identified issues with the quality and choice of meals. We will feed this back to schools.
- The need to publicise the wider scheme – a number of parents were unaware of the wider offer the council makes. We have included details on the letters we send out to parents in each round but we will look at further communication around this.
- Reminding parents on eligibility and the interaction with universal infant free school meals – there remains a gap in the awareness of the eligibility criteria for free school meals. It is proposed a letter is sent out to parents via schools annually which will include information on how to apply, the criteria and how this interacts with the CHVS.

3.13 It is proposed that this survey is re-run in 2025 to understand the position of the scheme and the challenges parents face with feeding their children. The results of the survey have been shared with Public Health and Communities teams for further consideration of action.

4. Alternative Options Considered

4.1 The decision to fund the scheme was agreed by Full Council. Options around the scheme have been considered including moving to a single annual payment and changing criteria. However, the scheme is well understood currently and has high engagement / take up. Any changes may impact upon this.

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

5.1 The paper outlines the proposal for the continuation of the successful holiday voucher scheme. We are proposing no changes to the scheme operation aside from adjusting voucher value to meet the availability of funding.

6. Significant Implications

6.1 Finance Implications

At its meeting on 13th February 2024, the County Council agreed to continue to provide the Cambridgeshire Holiday Voucher Scheme. This will mean that the County Council uses £3m of corporate resources in order to fund the costs of the scheme. This use of funding will be reviewed in line with any announcement from the government on the continuation of the Household Support Fund.

The Children and Young People's Committee is invited to decide the terms of the scheme to live within available resources, utilising the funds voted by Full Council, through this report.

6.2 Legal Implications

Appropriate legal advice has been taken in proceeding with the procurement process.

6.3 Risk Implications

The key risk is around demand increasing above the level of demand assumed in the allocation of the £3m. The scheme is monitored on a regular basis and funding rates will be adjusted to ensure there is no overspend and everyone eligible can access the scheme.

6.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

An EqlA was completed as part of the full council business case in February - CCC568956594.

6.5 Climate Change and Environment Implications

None identified.

7. Source Documents

None

Appendix 1 – Cambridgeshire Holiday Voucher Scheme Parent Survey – October 2023

1. Which area of Cambridgeshire do you live in?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Cambridge City	19.55%	105
2	East Cambridgeshire	12.48%	67
3	Fenland	23.46%	126
4	Huntingdonshire	21.97%	118
5	South Cambridgeshire	19.37%	104
6	Don't know / I don't wish to share this information	3.17%	17

2. On a scale of 1 – 5 (5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree), the Cambridgeshire Holiday Voucher Scheme has helped my family with the cost-of-living crisis.

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	1 - Strongly Disagree	5.40%	29
2	2 - Disagree	0.93%	5
3	3 - Neither Agree nor Disagree	7.45%	40
4	4 - Agree	21.04%	113
5	5 - Strong Agree	65.18%	350

Feedback from parents -

- The supermarket vouchers have been a life saver!
- It has been a lifeline.
- It makes such a big difference to know I can feed the children healthy food in holiday time; without this help I don't know how I would manage.
- It has helped me and my family in so many ways...to helping my children have decent food instead of just cheap all the time... to helping with holiday clubs which my children love

going to and I just can't afford to take them without the holiday voucher scheme... what will i do... they love going... if it ends that's it :(

- some weeks the holiday vouchers have been the difference between eating bean on toast and actual food.
- The holiday voucher scheme has literally been a lifesaver at times, it's so helpful and needed.
- I have found it helped me to know that I had the food voucher to spend on my children during the holidays. Without this I would have struggled to make sure they ate enough.
- That really do help.
- These vouchers really help put food on the table are much needed thank you.
- It has really helped provide essential food for my child, a scheme that shouldn't be stopped!
- So grateful for the vouchers, they have massively helped our family.
- We have only been getting them from this year as I was on working tax credits & receiving less money than I am now on UC so I'm glad my children now qualify for FSM & the vouchers.
- By having help with the vouchers so I can buy fresh food and make healthier meals
- massive help when you have 2 hungry children all the time.
- Invaluable support, I don't know how we would of survived.
- It's been very helpful.
- We are family from Ukraine. And we are very appreciative of your help and support. It helped us so much to adapt in new circumstances.
- I use the food voucher every time and is a god send for the holidays to help feed my son.
- I've never been eligible despite struggling.
- As self-employed people, one of our businesses collapsed during the pandemic and we are only just rebuilding. Prices are so high now it's a lifeline.
- That helps a lot my child won't be hungry even when that is just a bread
- It's massively helped with our grocery bill. One of my sons has coeliacs disease and the cost of gluten free food is extortionate. This has helped with the cost of his food.
- The vouchers have been helpful as my income does not cover my living expenses. I have been able to get some essentials for my child.
- Two children at home eat more from the house larder than they do when they are at school.
- It really helped me.
- Has helped lots!
- All help is appreciated in this economy currently.
- Even though I am on a low wage as a single working parent I am not entitled to any help through this fund sadly. It would greatly benefit my family when things are this tight
- I am not eligible for any other financial support and as a single parent living in South Cambridgeshire on very low income the supermarket vouchers have been a huge help in feeding my child.
- It is a huge help considering the cost of living now.
- This additional funding makes a huge difference to our family.
- Very limited options for the use of said vouchers.
- Has been a vital source for me.
- If it was not for this, I would not be able to financially get through the school holidays
- The vouchers having a long expiry date really helps.
- There have been times over the period of this scheme running where these vouchers really have been a lifeline.
- With cost of living the £15 does not go very far.

- I have two girls, so I always get two vouchers. It makes such a difference ... every penny counts in our household.
- I am on a low income and because of the holiday voucher scheme my son could attend clubs he wouldn't have been able to go to due to my financial problems.
- It has helped tremendously!! I cannot express how much the scheme has helped the past few years! It makes sure my kids have healthy and enough to eat during the holidays without giving the bare minimum food then starving myself to feed them.
- We went through being homeless with a new baby do really help a lot
- We have relied on these vouchers many times in the school holidays. We would really struggle to provide food for the kids without them.
- This has helped a lot. I have two children at home in the holidays and without the vouchers we would have struggled.
- It was helping but with cost of living and prices going up so much, the amount wasn't enough to cover the outgoings (food) for 2 children .
- The food money has helped so much.
- I can afford to work during all holidays.
- Really helped towards shopping to feed my child when they are off school. so grateful to have that support in place to help get some more food in.
- Helps a lot with food as they eat so much in the holidays.
- This has help me out so much because I have had to make sure I have electricity and gas with these going up in prices I'm forever topping up.
- This is a good scheme.
- The voucher scheme has helped me so much during the holidays having that extra money really took the worry of money wise. Really appreciate the help.
- This is a wonderful help especially since taking a lower income and working for the NHS
- We have been so grateful for these just making sure that the cupboards and fridge have food in them when the kids are of school is a lifesaver.
- Became a single parent family in Nov 2021 so these vouchers have really helped with the cost of food in the holidays.
- It has been a massive help! Without it, as a large family we would struggle.
- With the cost of living how it is this has helped me out tremendously.
- Having these vouchers helps me feed my 3 children during the holidays.
- Made a big difference, past few years have been challenging, knowing the voucher was there was comforting.
- As a single mum of 3 who was in an abusive relationship at the start of the voucher scheme and is now going through chemotherapy so cannot work currently, these vouchers have been a god send each time I have received them. The only complaint I'd have is the Limited stores to use them at and the even more limited choice to use online. That said I thoroughly appreciate each one I have received. Thank-you.
- It helped me feed my family healthier meals during half term
- It's helped so much.
- This scheme has been very helpful. Also, the HAF scheme has been very helpful.
- I'm grateful for both initiatives.
- Yes, it does a little help to minimise the day to day living cost
- It's been a god send.
- Very helpful
- Without these vouchers I honestly don't know how I'd have fed my children throughout the school holiday.

- Some parent including ourselves have come to have to rely on the voucher schemes since they began, now more than ever families need extra support to ensure their children don't have to suffer in poverty.
- It has helped me hugely in the holidays. At some points without this I wouldn't have been able to get through the week of the holidays.

3. On a scale of 1 – 5 (5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree), the Cambridgeshire Holiday Voucher scheme has reduced the need for my family to access other support during the school holidays e.g. food banks etc

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	1 - Strongly Disagree	4.67%	25
2	2 - Disagree	3.18%	17
3	3 - Neither Agree or Disagree	17.76%	95
4	4 - Agree	28.60%	153
5	5 - Strong Agree	45.79%	245

- Still had to have help from food bank
- I think the holiday voucher scheme is brilliant
- If it wasn't for the extra support I would of had to use a food bank for sure
- Don't think it will make much difference
- We have still needed occasional support from Food banks and food hubs around times when I've had to spend more money than usual like recently on school uniforms
- If it wasn't for the vouchers I would have definitely had to use a food bank
- Having kids eat in the clubs took extra pressure of providing and cooking food for them for those days allowing me time to rest
- With the cost of living which is skyrocketing, fortunately I still have to access support with food from my local church.
- very grateful
- Still have to feed them when they get back and the food not very good and most of the times they need to take a pack lunch
- All help is needed for us struggling at the bottom of the barrel
 - The voucher scheme has been a welcome help but I have still had to access food banks - sadly my local food bank has almost always run out of food by the time I am able to get there on a Friday. I currently work 50 hours a week so I am unable to access the food bank at other times.
- The voucher scheme has really helped take the pressure off from the food costs of the holidays where my son is not getting a meal at school.
- Everything counts
- Due to our situation we also needed food bank

- My children have allergies, so our groceries are more expensive than the average household, but the scheme has helped towards cost of living during holidays.
- Thank you very much for help and support
- Had 1 food bank donation in Christmas 2021
- Food banks are great source of help but often have limited choices which is not always suitable for specific needs of the family

4. On a scale of 1 – 5 (5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree), the CHVS and supporting information has helped me understand the cost-of-living support that is available in my local area.

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	1 - Strongly Disagree	3.39%	18
2	2 - Disagree	3.95%	21
3	3 - Neither Agree or Disagree	26.55%	141
4	4 - Agree	38.23%	203
5	5 - Strong Agree	27.87%	148

- Didn't realise how much support there is available
- I have also found out information from professionals around us about what is available to help
- Really helped me, didn't realise how much help there was
- Very helped me when i needed it
- I find it confusing that there is a grey area where, you can not claim if your circumstances don't meet the set guidelines. Other people need help too, and reaching out can be embarrassing
- The benefits system is incredibly complicated to navigate and very off putting to try to access. It is practically impossible to get assistance from a CAB as their waiting lists are so long.
- I'm not sure about any other options so I'd be grateful of more info
- I have not benefited from it before.
- I know little about it, never having claimed before this.
- They have provided me with a bit of help towards entitlement to reduction on my water bill and council tax and so forth.
- I haven't received any information on what support is available in my area through this scheme.

5. On a scale of 1 – 5 (5 being strongly agree and 1 being strongly disagree), the Cambridgeshire Holiday Voucher Scheme has helped me purchase more healthy food (Vegetables and Fruits) for my family.

Answer Choices	Response Percent	Response Total
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1	1 - Strongly Disagree		4.50%	24
2	2 - Disagree		3.56%	19
3	3 - Neither Agree or Disagree		15.76%	84
4	4 - Agree		35.83%	191
5	5 - Strong Agree		40.34%	215

- I tend to buy the healthiest options anyway, but the summer holidays and Christmas are particularly difficult with having 5 children at home.
- It has certainly helped especially as I have SEN children that have food sensitivity.
- Fresh food can be much more expensive so it's very helpful
- With the vouchers I use them with my weekly food shop and can buy fresh fruit and veg, I can afford to cook better meals instead of the cheap processed stuff that I usually buy as I literally have no money
- Fruit and vegetables are very expensive especially with 3 children it has supported to me to be able to give them healthier meals.
- My family greatly appreciated this
- Having the extra voucher support has given us the opportunity to buy more fresh foods to make fresh healthier meals
- I have an autistic child with ARFRID i have purchased foods appropriate to his needs.
- Already think that we eat healthy food
- Fruit and vegetables are so expensive, I try and make sure my children have their 5 a day but because of being neurodiverse they will only eat certain foods and e.g. almost £2 for 4 pears x by 7 if they eat one every day is a lot of money & that's just one good type.
- I have been able to buy more fruit and vegetables and made healthier food choices
- I have been able to get the basic food items to keep us going in the house until payday.
- Yes, on my hard moments, when i was struggling it helped me
- Very strongly agree!
- I purchase healthy food regardless of the Voucher Scheme. We are anyway vegetarian on compassionate and health grounds.
- I already purchase nutritious foods as well balanced
- I've been able to meal prep with more vegetables because of the financial "breathing space" that the vouchers have provided. My son is autistic and very hesitant to try new things as a result, so I've been able to experiment with different ways to present vegetables to find a way that he would try them. I wouldn't have been able to do that as much if I'd had to worry about the additional spending on vegetables.
- I have been able to buy extra during the holidays
- I did already get healthy food.
- Health food is expensive
- If we did get the vouchers I would be able to get fruit for my children but I seem to run out of money so quickly, when the electric is so high and the food also very high.
- The majority of the vouchers are spent on fruit or veg as we can only afford the bare minimum usually
- We always purchase healthy meals where possible. The cost of fruit and vegetables is ridiculously high now and uses up much of the voucher total. It may be worth revisiting this

and looking at vouchers for fruits and vegetables, for eligible families - like the healthy start vouchers for babies.

- Definitely wouldn't have been able to buy the fruits my children ask for without the vouchers
- Sadly Fruit and Vegetables are more expensive than a packet of biscuits. Having boys who are constantly hungry and wanting snacks, this is hard to afford.
- Healthier food options have always been and still are more costly than processed unhealthier options. The extra finance the scheme provides during the holidays makes it just a little easier to provide struggling families with the nutrition everyone should have access to

6. For those families who have applied for free school meals since December 2020, did the offer of a supermarket voucher during the holidays encourage you to apply for free school meals?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	1 - Strongly Disagree	3.41%	18
2	2 - Disagree	3.60%	19
3	3 - Neither Agree or Disagree	24.62%	130
4	4 - Agree	19.13%	101
5	5 - Strong Agree	17.05%	90
6	6 - Not applicable	32.20%	170

- Two of my children were in key stage 1 when the vouchers came into affect one was home schooled and one in secondary school, I paid for his lunches as I wasn't aware that I was entitled to free school meals, and the twins being in KS1 meant that I automatically got free school meals, so I actually didn't receive any vouchers until April 2022, until a friend told me,
- Wasn't aware it comes with the vouchers
- My daughter has always had free school meals but I will have to apply for them in year three I think.
- I was on working tax credits on a low income so my children didn't qualify for FSM until I changed to UC which seems really unfair for those families that's still the case.
- I have applied several times and been unsuccessful as I claim working tax credits, even when I swap to universal credit my wage will be too much to qualify, but I still struggle to feed my kids some weeks
- Loosing my entire household income overnight because of lockdown restrictions forced me to accept free school meals and to make an application for Pupil Premium. The Church in my village paid one electricity bill during that time (six months with zero income). This was the only financial assistance available to me as a single mother.
- School already gave and sent us the information about the free school meals before we found out about the voucher scheme
- We weren't aware that we were getting school meals till a year in.

- I didn't know my boys were entitled to free school meals, I was very surprised and grateful that the school informed me. This was a huge relief and help.
- I applied for free school meals but never got any Holiday vouchers

7. Do you have other comments you wish to share about the scheme?

- The scheme has made a peace of mind for when half terms and holidays occur
- This scheme has help me to buy the extra food consumed during the holidays and I am entirely grateful for it
- I think Parents with children in KS1 who would be eligible for free school meals due to their circumstances should be informed, as they automatically getting free school meals I didn't know I was entitled
- Having four children the scheme has helped my family so much. I think it's one of the best things the government has come up with for families. It is amazing! Thank you so much!
- It has been tremendously helpful.
- I have thoroughly appreciated this scheme in helping make these expensive and worrying times slightly less of a burden.
- Excellent scheme.... very helpful for struggling families in this financially difficult time.
- This truly makes a difference to our family not only the children but for me knowing that I can afford to feed them a healthy filling lunch whilst they are in school holidays
- This scheme was so very helpful, thank you!
- Great
- Every child should be eligible for food voucher
- It's the best thing ever for me and my family. I can't thank the scheme enough for the food vouchers and the holiday club
- Brilliant scheme
- The voucher scheme has been a massive help to my family and highly appreciated! Thank you.
- I think it's amazing especially considering the price of food I would have had to rely on food banks every week if we didn't get the vouchers
- Just a big thankyou for the support it is massively appreciated
- I worry about this scheme ending and having enough money for food.
- It will be more helpful if you increased the voucher amount
- This scheme has supported my little family ensuring we can still have healthy meals. I have been less reliant on the foodbank since receiving the support from the holiday voucher scheme. My children have also been able to take part in activities that wouldn't normally be available to them. This means they can be part of their community. Enriching their lives.
- I am very grateful for these support in difficult times! It's been a great help! Thank you!!
- As we do not meet the threshold we have not received these vouchers even though we are a low income family
- Brilliant idea and couldn't be more grateful for the support
- i think it should be expanded to families who claim DLA for their child
- It's a very helpful scheme
- I have really appreciated every extra penny we have received
- Brilliant idea
- The scheme has really made a difference to us as a family during school holidays as money can be tight and it has enabled us to not worry so much about being able to buy food.

- It's been extremely helpful
- The vouchers have provided us with reassurance that we can feed our children during the holidays
- Thank you for help!
- My son is a coeliac and the cost of gluten free food is vastly higher than normal products
- I received vouchers occasionally but not every school holiday. Sometimes I get them but more often I don't get them
- Don't stop this please.
- Very helpful
- It should be offered to all survivors of domestic abuse and single parents as well as low income families. It helps immensely providing safe setting for children to socialise and play in, especially for those with history of domestic abuse and Safeguarding concerns
- Help the need to use
- As someone who works full time and a single parent, I have appreciated the help from the scheme. There have been days when I do not know what I will feed my child but with the help of the vouchers we have not gone without a meal.
- Just to say thank you, it has helped a lot
- I just want to say, i am very happy we have scheme like this!
- Families not in receipt of benefits not eligible for any additional support and it's not fair
- Thank you for all the support, from all the families benefited.
- I have not had any but I am looking forward to having voucher this holiday which I believe it would be strongly useful for my family
- I think there should be some discretionary area, working parents can also struggle with high rents and low incomes, the stigma of asking for help is hard to overcome for many people and quite often families like mine suffer as we can't make ends meet
- Increase scheme all item in supermarkets goes up
- When you are on low income you are pigeon holed by Council staff who may respond differently if they found themselves in the same predicament overnight.
- Thank you for the help!
- It will be such a shame if it comes to an end
- This scheme has definitely helped me during some very difficult times
- This scheme has been an absolute life saver. I would have struggled a lot more financially without it.
- The supermarket prices have gone up so much that families are struggling
- It has been very helpful and I would like to see it continue
- It's a great scheme, the childcare places in the holidays have been so helpful while I'm working. I hope it continues in some form after March.
- Thanks
- this scheme has made a big difference to my yearly budget. many thanks.
- It's a great scheme
- It's really helped my family
- The scheme has helped us as family in so many ways. And I would like to say Thank you.
- It's a fantastic scheme which is helping lots of families make sure their children can eat properly during the holidays.
- It's been very helpful and reduced a lot of stress about buying food. Thank you.
- We are grateful for the scheme.
- This scheme has been a great help for me and little boy.
- Very helpful

- I'm very grateful for this scheme and very happy that it is helping other families as well facing financial difficulties.
- This ensures my children don't go hungry during the holidays.
- It's helped a great deal.
- The vouchers help so much, also Wednesday food parcel from school is a massive help.
- It's a good scheme it's just a shame healthy food cost so much.
- The scheme provides excellent additional support. Thank you.
- The availability is sparse.
- thank you for helping.
- This has made my children's lives better.
- This is a brilliant scheme.
- FSM is sometimes the first and only meal my child has during the week, and the supermarket voucher is a lifeline to ensure I can get the extra food required for the week when he is at home.
- This is the best thing the government has ever done for families especially during summer holidays.
- A nice support
- Should be readily available to all.
- it's been very helpful but should be of a higher monetary value.
- The scheme has really helped me and my family and budget through the holidays.
- Just, Thank You!
- Really helped my family as a single mum. I wouldn't have been able to feed my children without it.
- Just to say thank you and it is really appreciated.
- It has been incredibly helpful especially during the longer end of term holidays.
- I can't explain how helpful these vouchers have been to us. I'm not sure what we'd have done without them. The past couple of years have been amazingly hard.
- It is a great help, thank you!
- As a single mother of two this voucher scheme has meant I can put on the table. I work full time 12 hours a day and that barely covers the roof over our head, the vouchers and free school meals have kept my family fed.
- Just thank you, they have been very helpful.
- Thank you.
- With this scheme whilst I have hit hard times has been more help than I could've ever thought possible. With no money left over after paying bills, or needing money for electricity & food between, this scheme has ensured my boys have food to eat. Thank you.
- Yes, the vouchers they been helping my family and the school free meals.
- It has been immense help especially throughout Covid lockdowns with limited jobs but also since cost-of-living crisis
- In my opinion the scheme should extend throughout the cost-of-living crisis. Families are doing their best to provide what is needed for happy healthy children and those children should not suffer for things that are out of theirs and their parents/carers control.
- Really appreciate the support
- Great scheme, enabled me to provide a little more variety and healthy foods during the holidays.
- This has been an invaluable help to our family for help with grocery purchases at a time when we are struggling to make ends meet. It must help so many families in the same position and i hope that it will continue in the future to help those that are less fortunate.

- Very helpful and helped lift a weight off my chest.