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28th September 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

Food Support for Families

Further to our letter dated 8th July where we advised that there would be no further Holiday vouchers paid due to changes in government funding, BCP council have asked schools to provide the following information to families, to sign post where families can still access support.

Families can continue to access a range of food and financial support, including Healthy Start Scheme and Top Up Card, Free School Meals, Holiday Activities and Food (HAF), Crisis Payments, local food projects and money advice.

If you're worried about the cost of food or other household essentials, support is available.

Although changes to government funding, has led to the end of supermarket vouchers for school holidays being issued, families can continue to access a range of food and financial support, including Healthy Start Scheme, Free School Meals, Holiday Activities and Food (HAF), local food support, Crisis Payments and money advice.

BCP created a new Food Support for Families page on the Family Information Directory (FID), bringing together information about food, money and practical support available to families across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. **[Link and FAQs for families](#)**.

The page also links to the Access to Food Map, where families can find local food banks, community fridges, food pantries, social supermarkets and community meals close to where they live.

Whether you're facing financial difficulties or need a little extra help, there are organisations across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole ready to support you.

[Food Support for Families](#)

Free School Meals

Did you know more families are now eligible for Free School Meals?

If you have already applied for Free School Meals from 1st June 2026 and have received an acknowledgement from BCP council, there is no need to reapply.

Children eligible for Targeted Free School Meals may also qualify for:

 Holiday Activities and Food (HAF), providing free holiday activities and meals during school holidays



 Pupil Premium

 Other educational benefits and support available through schools, such as free uniform, help towards music tuition, and support towards school trips.

 [Check your eligibility and find out more about Free School Meals](#)

Healthy Start Scheme and Top Up Card

What is Healthy Start?

If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4, you may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk.

If you're eligible, you'll be sent a Healthy Start card with money on it that you can use in some UK shops. You'll get money added onto your Healthy Start card every 4 weeks

Eligible pregnant women and families with children under four can receive support towards:

- Milk
- Fruit and vegetables
- Infant formula
- Healthy Start vitamins

 <https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>

More Help Available

Help is also available through Crisis Payments, local food projects, Let's Talk Money Advice, Energy Support, Welcome Community Spaces, Housing Payments and Cost of Living Support.

 <https://www.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/communities/cost-of-living-help>

We hope that you find the information contained within this letter helpful and should you need any further information or help, please contact BCP council on 01202 123222 or email them using fsm@bcpcouncil.gov.uk.

Kind regards



Mrs Easton
Trust Admin Manager

