

November 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

On 4 September 2024, the Chancellor announced, that the Household Support Fund grant would be extended for a further six months from 1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025. The objective of the Department for Work and Pensions' Household Support Fund grant is to provide crisis support to vulnerable households in most need with the cost of essentials, in particular food, energy, and water bills.

As a parent or carer with one or more children who are eligible for benefits related free school meals, Warwickshire County Council will be providing vouchers to support you during these challenging times.

Instead of two grant funded cost of living payments in November and February, this time you will receive one higher payment by **27 November 2024**. This will be a £50 voucher for each child at home who is in receipt of benefits related free school meals in addition to one £125 voucher for each eligible Warwickshire household to help with your household costs. Please note an eligible Warwickshire household is someone permanently residing with a residential address within Warwickshire.

The supermarket vouchers will be processed automatically, and you **do not** need to contact us to apply. You will be sent an SMS text message or email from our voucher scheme **Huggg**, with a message from Warwickshire County Council that will have a link to the supermarket vouchers attached.

You will need to activate your voucher by:

- clicking on this link and then 'Tell me more' followed by 'I'm ready to claim,'
- selecting which supermarket you would like to shop at (the choices are Aldi, Asda, Farmfoods, Iceland, McColl's, Morrison's, Sainsbury's, Tesco, and Waitrose),
- selecting 'Claim now' and,
- once you have chosen your voucher, hitting 'Click for your voucher.'

The final screen will reveal the voucher from your chosen supermarket, and you will need this to pay for your shopping. Vouchers can all be used instore and those from Asda, Sainsbury's, and Waitrose can also be used online. The voucher value does not have to be spent all at the same time, so please ensure you keep your vouchers safe.

If we do not have a valid mobile number for you, we will send the voucher link to you by email from hello@huggg.me If you do not have a smartphone, we will post the voucher.

If you have a problem with activating your voucher, please use the 'Frequently Asked Questions' online at <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/localwelfarescheme> or use the Chat facility on the Hugg website <https://www.huggg.me/>

Please check the expiry date on your voucher as it cannot be redeemed or reissued after the expiry date, so ensure you activate your voucher within this time. Do also check your spam or junk folders just in case the emails have gone in there.

The Local Welfare Scheme can help you with the following issues. Please call 0800 4081448 or 01926 359182, between **10am and 2pm only**, when staff will be available to assist you.

- You do **not** receive the SMS text or email voucher link for your child or children by **Thursday 28 November 2024**. You can call us between **10am and 2pm from 28 November to 11 December 2024** and will still receive the full voucher value. We receive an exceptionally high volume of calls so you may wish to consider calling after the 5 December 2024 when the phone lines may be less busy.
- If a supermarket from the options listed is not easily accessible and an online delivery is not possible.
- If you have other children who are not yet attending school and would like to claim an additional Hugg supermarket voucher for these children, please call us between **28 November to 11 December 2024** only to apply. Again, we receive an exceptionally high volume of calls so you may wish to consider calling after the 5 December 2024 when the phone lines may be less busy.

The value of additional vouchers will be £20 per eligible child and to claim an additional voucher for children who are not yet attending school, you will need to provide supporting documents of eligibility in the form of a Child Benefit award notice. You can [use the online service](#) on Government Gateway or the [HMRC app](#) to print your 'proof of entitlement' page.

Please note: The Local Welfare Scheme will be using the Household Support Fund to support other Warwickshire residents with utility costs starting in December 2024. As part of this cost of living payment in November, you have received a £125 voucher for your household, therefore **you are not eligible to apply again**.

Further information on support is available for residents on the following websites:

- <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/localwelfarescheme>
- <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/costofliving>
- <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/>

Yours sincerely



Craig Cusack
Director of Enabling Services