

CHILDREN AND LEARNING SERVICE

Southampton City Council
Civic Centre
Southampton
SO14 7LY



For more information visit:

<https://soton.cc/crisisresiliencefund>

Date: 16 September 2026

Dear Parents/Guardians

Crisis & Resilience Fund– Free School Meal Eligible Pupils

I am writing to update you on changes to school holiday support for pupils eligible for Free School Meals, and to explain the support available through the Crisis and Resilience Fund and the Holiday Activities and Food programme.

From Autumn 2026, Southampton City Council will no longer provide supermarket vouchers during school holidays to families with children who receive benefits-related free school meals.

School holidays can bring additional costs for families, and some households may need extra support. The support we provide is changing so that help can be focused on households experiencing the greatest financial difficulty. Families experiencing financial difficulty may be able to access the new Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF). The fund provides support for households facing a financial crisis and unable to meet essential, immediate costs.

More information about the [Crisis Resilience Fund](#) and [cost of living](#) support is available online. To be able to access the Crisis and Resilience Fund, you must be:

- A Southampton resident
- On a low-income
- Experiencing a financial shock or crisis

More information about how to apply for support can be found online through the [Southampton Citizens Advice](#) service.

We will also be launching a new Crisis Payment Scheme for residents in late October.

Separate funding has been allocated to the [Holiday Activities and Food \(HAF\)](#) programme, which will continue to provide free holiday activities and nutritious meals for eligible young people during the school holidays. [Further information on eligibility and how to access the programme is available online.](#)

This means eligible young people will still be able to access the HAF programme, even though supermarket vouchers will no longer be provided during school holidays.

Families who are already receiving support through a school, Best Start Family Hub, health visitor or another professional can ask them for help to access support.

Yours sincerely

Robert Henderson
Executive Director for Wellbeing (Children and Learning)