

## Information for parents

### Holiday Support Vouchers

Stockport Council are pleased to announce that families of school-age children who are eligible for income-based Free School Meals and those in early years with equivalent eligibility, will receive vouchers to the value of **£60 per eligible child** to help with the cost of food, essential utilities and other essential living costs this February half term and Easter holiday.

**Please note, vouchers received at February half term cover both February half term and the Easter holiday.**

Families do not need to do anything to apply and will automatically receive a voucher for any child for who they have claimed income-based free school meals. Vouchers will only be sent to families who had a claim on or before 24 January 2022.

For families where the council holds an email address, will receive an electronic voucher via the Post Office. For those where the council does not hold an email address, will be sent an Aldi supermarket voucher in the post.

Vouchers will be sent out **from 9 February 2022**. The council will send an email directly to families to notify them once the vouchers have been issued.

Email vouchers will be valid for **3 weeks** from the date of the email.

If you are eligible but have not received your voucher by 11 February 2022, be sure to check your spam/junk folders. If you still cannot find your voucher, visit [www.stockport.gov.uk/free-school-meals/holiday-support-voucher](http://www.stockport.gov.uk/free-school-meals/holiday-support-voucher) for more information. The webpage also has suggestions and tips for finding, opening and redeeming your voucher.

### Other support available:

#### **Holiday Activities**

Over the Easter holiday, there will be free and fun holiday activities and food for school-age children who are in receipt of means tested free school meals. To find out more visit: <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/haf>. If you need help to find information or to sign up for clubs and activities, please email [HAF@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:HAF@stockport.gov.uk).

#### **Your Local Pantry scheme**

The 'Your Local Pantry' scheme by Stockport Homes Group helps people access affordable food from 5 locations across the borough. Memberships range from standard (£3.50 per week) to family (£6.50 per week). In return members can select up to 10 items with a standard membership or up to 20 items with a family membership. Members can select from a range of non-perishable items, fresh fruit and vegetables, as well as chilled and frozen items. During February half term, there will be more support for Pantry members across the 5 Stockport locations. For more information, please follow the Your Local Pantry Facebook pages or visit [www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk](http://www.yourlocalpantry.co.uk).

#### **Stockport Council Support Fund**

If you're a Stockport resident, you can apply to Support Funds for help such as a food bank referral; help to find items that you may need in your home (cooker, fridge, washing machine); gas and electricity top up for prepaid meters; help paying your Council Tax; payment of a shortfall in rent; or help to apply to a charity or trust fund. For more information and to apply for help visit: <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/financial-support-in-a-crisis>.

### **Advice and Support**

Additional support and advice can be found at: <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/money-advice-and-support-coronavirus>

### **Healthy Start Vouchers**

Families who have a child under the age of 4 or are pregnant, you may also be eligible for further support through the NHS Healthy Start Scheme. More information can be found at [www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk). You can also ask a midwife or health visitor for help or phone the Healthy Start helpline on 0345 607 6823.

### **Foodbanks**

To request a food bank referral, contact Stockport Citizens Advice on 0808 278 7803.

### **Stockport Council Welfare Rights Team**

A team of experienced specialist advisers can represent you at benefits appeals or if you have a problem with your benefits. For more information, visit: <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/help-with-benefit-appeals>. If you need any help completing the form, you can contact the Welfare Rights Team by email at [welfare.rights@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:welfare.rights@stockport.gov.uk) or by calling 0161 217 6003.

***If you need help getting online, contact the DigiKnow Helpline on 07537 127095.***