



Coastal Learning
PARTNERSHIP

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6th October 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Subject: Letter from BCP Council regarding changes to Holiday Food Support

Food Support for Families

Following changes to government funding, supermarket vouchers for school holidays will no longer be issued from October half term 2026 onwards. If you're worried about the cost of food or other household essentials, support is available.

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 Council have 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.

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 from 1 June 2026 and have received an acknowledgement, 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
- 👉 [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>

