# School holiday voucher scheme has ended

For the past few years, Newcastle City Council has been providing vouchers to families whose children receive means-tested free school meals to help with the cost of food and other essentials during school holidays.

That support was funded through the Household Support Fund (HSF), a government grant funded by the Department for Work and Pensions.

However, the government ended that fund on 31 March 2026.

While the council continued to provide vouchers until the end of the 2025 to 2026 academic year through the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) to those who had previously received them, CRF guidance says we are longer able to do this.

No further vouchers will be issued to families during school holidays such as October half term, Christmas or Easter.

## Other support available

While the vouchers have ended families in need can access a range of other support.

### Money advice and support

#### Benefits

To check what benefits you can receive, or for debt and money advice from Newcastle City Council, and help with benefit applications, see www.newcastle.gov.uk/benefits

#### Crisis and resilience fund

If you are in crisis, or have suffered a sudden financial shock, you may be entitled to a crisis support payment – see www.newcastle.gov.uk/crisis-resilience-fund for details of how to apply

#### Council tax support

If you are on a low income help may be available to assist you in meeting the cost of your council tax

### Help to feed your family

#### Healthy start

If you have a child under 4, you may be entitled to receive help to buy food and milk through the NHS Healthy Start scheme.

For more information see www.healthystart.nhs.uk.

#### Food banks

If you are struggling to afford to eat, food banks or charities may also be able to help.

To find a food bank near you, visit Information Now at www.informationnow.org.uk/food-banks

#### Low cost meal advice

Find ideas for healthy low cost meals in ‘Air Fry and Eat Well’ from Children and Families Newcastle at https://childrenandfamiliesnewcastle.org.uk/pregnancy-and-early-years/pre-school-children/eat-well

## Support for families

Children and Families Newcastle has information on a range of activities, groups and support, including through your nearest family hub.

For more information see https://childrenandfamiliesnewcastle.org.uk

## Help with anything else

For free, confidential, independent advice on benefits, debt, housing, law, immigration and more, contact Citizens Advice Newcastle by:

- calling 0808 278 7823
- visiting www.citizensadvice-newcastle.org.uk
- attending a weekday drop in session at City Library (Monday to Friday, 10am to midday)