

May 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

On 30 October 2024, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the Household Support Fund (HSF) would be extended for a further twelve months, from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. The primary 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. The cost of living support is only available to children attending a Warwickshire maintained school and in receipt of benefits related free school meals, this does not apply to siblings not yet attending school or children receiving the Universal Free School Meal offer.

You will receive the cost of living payment by 8 May 2025 This will be a £50 voucher for each child who is in receipt of benefits related free school meals in addition to one £70 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, M&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, M&S, 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 email 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 **Monday 12 May 2025**. You can call us between **10am and 2pm from the 12 and 23 May 2025** 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 15 May 2025 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.

Please note: The Local Welfare Scheme will be using the Household Support Fund to support other Warwickshire residents with utility costs starting in June 2025. As part of this cost of living payment in May 2025, you have received a £70 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