

January 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

Important information regarding Household Support Fund discretionary grant

Suffolk County Council (SCC) is pleased to confirm a further discretionary grant is available to support low-income families over the February half term and Easter holiday 2024.

The grant will be issued as a **£45** supermarket voucher for each eligible child from our provider **Pluxee** to cover both the February half term (£15) and Easter holidays (£30) and is designed to help families with their essential living costs during the holiday.

To ensure that SCC meets the reporting requirements of the Household Support Fund, you will need to redeem all vouchers by **Friday 12 April 2024**. Voucher redemption after this date will not be possible as the fund for 2023/24 will be closed.

As with previous issues of vouchers, the SCC Free School Meals (FSM) team will place the voucher order using the information provided by your child's school. Please ensure that your child's school holds the most up to date contact information for you, so that the voucher is sent to the correct recipient.

If the school has previously printed the vouchers on your behalf, then this arrangement will continue, or you can ask for the voucher to be sent via text message to your mobile phone number. **Please inform your school if you wish to receive the vouchers via text message, if you have previously been unable to receive them via email.**

We aim to have all vouchers sent to recipients by **Thursday 15 February 2024**. If you have **not received the vouchers by this date** or in the event of any queries regarding the vouchers, then please contact our team at freeschoolmeals@suffolk.gov.uk, rather than speaking to the school directly.

Please note, that if you have children who attend different Suffolk schools, you may receive your vouchers at separate times before the start of the school holiday.

Please look out for an email from noresponse@vouchers.sodexoengage.com, and please also check junk and spam folders before contacting us directly.

Please can we remind you that your voucher must be redeemed before Friday 12 April 2024. Once redeemed, the expiry conditions of your chosen supermarket will apply, and you will have a minimum of 12 months to use the voucher. We urge you to contact our team by the end of March if you encounter any issues redeeming your voucher as we will not be able to access the funding once it has closed.

We hope that this discretionary grant goes some way to help in supporting your family during the school holiday, whether buying food or freeing up some income to go towards energy and water bills or other essential living costs.

If you are financial struggling and require additional support, further information can be found at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/healthier/cost-of-living-support/.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lucy Nicholas', written in a cursive style.

Lucy Nicholas (she/her)

Resource Manager (School Admissions and Travel)

Education, Skills and Learning

Directorate of Children and Young People

Suffolk County Council