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Dear Parents and Carers,

Important Update –Holiday Free School Meal Voucher Scheme

We are writing to inform you about an important change to the Holiday Free School Meal (FSM) Voucher Scheme.

This voucher scheme, which has provided financial support to eligible families during school holidays, is funded by the Government's Household Support Fund.

The funding will end 31 March 2026 which means Easter 2026 holiday vouchers will be the final holiday vouchers issued under the scheme.

We understand this news may be difficult and we want to reassure you that a range of support remains available for families in Lewisham.

Information about these services is provided below: -

1. Free holiday activities and food – HAF Programme

Lewisham Council continues to run the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme, funded by the Department for Education. This provides free activities and a free nutritious meal during the Easter, summer and Christmas school holidays for children aged 4 to 16 who receive benefit-related free school meals.

If your child is eligible, you will receive an HAF code by email or text message before the holidays. You can use this code to book a place at one of the many fun activities available across Lewisham, including sports, arts and crafts, and trips – all with a free hot meal included each day.

If you have not received your code or need help booking, please contact the school office or visit [Lewisham HAF webpage](#)

2. Financial Advice and Support

- [Better Off Lewisham](#) – a free online calculator that helps you check your eligibility for benefits, grants and other support
- [Lewisham - Worrying about Money?](#) is a step-by-step guide with information on local organisations who can provide financial advice and support
- [Advice Lewisham](#) – for enquiries about benefits, housing, debt, employment, immigration, family and consumer issues. Call: 0800 231 5453.
- [Money Helper](#)– offers free, independent financial advice. Call: 0800 138 7777

3. Food support in Lewisham

There are several options for community food if you are experiencing hardship.

a. Lewisham Trussell Trust Foodbank

The foodbank provides emergency food parcels to people in crisis. A referral is required from a professional (such as a school, GP, or social worker), or you can obtain one by calling:

- Help Through Hardship: 0808 208 2138
- Advice Lewisham: 0800 231 5453

Foodbank locations and opening times:

- Deptford Salvation Army, Mary Ann Gardens, SE8 3DP
- Lewisham Salvation Army, 4 Albion Way, SE13 6BT – Mon 12:00–14:00
- St John the Baptist Church, 353 Bromley Road, SE6 2RP – Tue 10:00–12:00
- Perry Rise Baptist Church, Perry Rise, SE23 2QL – Wed 12:00–14:00
- Catford Salvation Army, 23–25 Brownhill Road, SE6 2HE – Thu 12:00–14:00 & Fri 10:00–12:00

Dietary needs are catered for where possible. On-site advice is available from Citizens Advice, AFRIL, Thames Reach, Employment Plus, NHS providers, family support services, and Spanish-speaking advisors.

For more information: Call 07938 071854 or info@lewisham.foodbank.org.uk

b. Community Food Projects

A wider network of free and low-cost food projects operates across the borough, including eight Community Pantries/Social Supermarkets offering a choice of fresh and dried food to low-income families for approximately £3.50–£5 per week membership.

To find support near you, visit [Lewisham Council - Food support services](#) page or [Community meals and food support](#) on [Good Food Lewisham's website](#), which includes a [printable list](#) and [interactive map](#).

c. Healthy Start Scheme

If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have children under 4, you may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk.

If you qualify you will receive payments every 4 weeks through a **Healthy Start Card**. The card is topped up with:

- £4.25 each week of your pregnancy from the 10th week
- £8.50 each week for children from birth to 1 year old
- £4.25 each week for children between 1 and 4 years old

The card can be used in some shops to purchase cow's milk, fresh/frozen/tinned fruit and vegetables, pulses, and infant formula. Apply for a [Healthy Start card](#).

4. Family Hubs

You can also visit one of Lewisham's family hubs for advice, support and help accessing other services

Family Hub	Address	Telephone	Email
Bellingham Family Hub	109–111 Randlesdown Road, London, SE6 3HB	020 8314 3320	bellinghamhub@lewisham.gov.uk
Deptford Family Hub	Clyde Nursery Building, Alverton Street, London, SE8 5NH	020 8694 3868	deptfordhub@lewisham.gov.uk
Downham Family Hub	Downderry Primary School, Shroffold Road, Bromley, BR1 5PD	020 8697 3792	downhamhub@lewisham.gov.uk
Eliot Bank Family Hub	Thorpewood Avenue, London, SE26 4BU	020 8699 1112	eliotbankhub@lewisham.gov.uk
Evelyn Family Hub	231 Grove Street, London, SE8 3PZ	020 8692 0349	evelynhub@lewisham.gov.uk
Honor Oak Youth and Family Hub	50 Turnham Road, London, SE4 2JD	020 8694 3929	honoroakhub@lewisham.gov.uk
Kaleidoscope Family Hub	32 Rushey Green, London, SE6 4JF	020 3049 8700	kaleidoscopehub@lewisham.gov.uk
Ladywell Family Hub	30 Rushey Mead, London, SE4 1JJ	020 8697 4274	ladywellhub@lewisham.gov.uk
Marvels Lane Family Hub	65 Riddons Road, London, SE12 9RA	020 8857 0035	marvelslanehub@lewisham.gov.uk

Need more help?

If you have any questions, please speak to your child's school or visit [Lewisham Cost of Living](#) webpages for further information.

