



Children, Young People and Education

County Hall
Sessions House
Maidstone ME14 1XQ
Date: 5th May 2026

Dear School/Provider/Parent / Carer / Guardian,

Changes to support for families with children eligible for Free School Meals

We are writing to let you know about an important change to the support available to families with children who are eligible for free school meals during school holidays.

End of supermarket vouchers funded by the Household Support Fund (HSF)

In recent years, families of children eligible for free school meals have received supermarket vouchers during school holidays. These vouchers were funded by the Government's Household Support Fund (HSF).

The HSF ended on 31 March 2026. As a result, no further supermarket vouchers will be issued for school holiday periods after Easter 2026.

Easter 2026 vouchers, where issued, remain live and can still be redeemed if families have not yet used them. Please ensure that these are downloaded fully as soon as possible.

We understand that this change may be difficult for families.

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

Support continues to be available through the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme.

The HAF Programme provides children aged 4 to 16 who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals with:

- Free holiday activities and experiences
- A healthy meal on the days they attend.

HAF activities run during the Easter, summer and Christmas school holidays. The council is also proposing to complement this existing support through the use of Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) monies, with appropriate governance arrangements currently being progressed.

Families can find out more and view local HAF activities by visiting:
[Holiday Activities and Food Programme \(HAF\) – Kent County Council](#)

Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF)

The Government has announced a new Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF), which is replacing the Household Support Fund.

The CRF will provide one-off support to individuals and families experiencing a financial crisis and aims to help build longer-term resilience.

Kent County Council is currently finalising how the CRF will operate locally. The fund is intended to complement existing support, including the HAF Programme, rather than replace it.

Further information will be shared on our website once arrangements are confirmed.

Further help and support

Additional national and local support may also be available to families:

- [Cost of living support: Overview - GOV.UK](#)
- [Universal Credit: What Universal Credit is - GOV.UK](#)
- [Child Benefit: How it works - GOV.UK](#)
- [Free Childcare for Working Parents: Check if you're eligible - GOV.UK](#)
- [Citizens Advice](#)
- [Free and impartial help with money, backed by the government | MoneyHelper](#)
- [Kent Family Hub - Kent County Council](#)

Yours sincerely

FSM Enquiries Team
Kent County Council