

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Chief Executive's Office

Cheshire West and Chester Council
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Dear Head Teacher

Household Support Fund

The council recognises that many residents are currently facing difficult financial challenges and is committed to providing support to its residents. Following receipt of the government's guidance for the latest Household Support Fund the council has been working with the Welcome Network, Poverty Truth Advisory Board (which includes residents with experience of financial hardship) and other organisations to devise its proposal for the allocation of the temporary funds.

The guidance specifies how the temporary funds are to be apportioned in supporting vulnerable groups with fuel, food and other emergency costs within the borough. The change has meant careful consideration has been needed to ensure the council maximises the reach of the temporary funds to as many residents as possible whilst adhering to requirements and this, unfortunately, has taken time.

Unfortunately, the council is not in a position to provide funding for supermarket vouchers to schools during May half term due, in part, to a change in central government guidance. However, support continues to be available for fuel, food and other emergencies through the council's Help in Emergency Scheme. The scheme is available throughout the whole of half term week (including the two bank holiday days) between 9am – 5pm and can be contacted by phone on 0300 123 0765 or by email at help@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk.

Food support for all residents is available all year round, including during the school holidays, through the Council-backed Welcome Network. Local community groups, currently providing food and support across the borough, have been mapped on the Welcome Network website,



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<http://www.welcomenet.co.uk/get-support.html> so that residents can access the information in one place. Groups that have chosen to access funding for May half term are below with a short description of what is being offered:-

- Rudheath and Witton Together: recipe bags for picnic lunches
- Blacon Beacon: Jubilee picnic lunch
- Chester Cathedral: ingredients and recipe for 2 slow cooker meals and 2 sandwich lunches
- Friends of Lache: picnic lunch for activity day to celebrate the Jubilee
- GGO Community Group: food for Jubilee event
- Soul Kitchen: food packs for children/families in temporary accommodation
- Elton Community Centre: vouchers for food for families to use at Jubilee Day
- Save the Family: Jubilee picnic and packed lunches for the children for the week
- Westminster Families: Wezzy Wednesdays lunch for children and families who are a part of Westminster Families community group

The Council's plans are well under way for a significant Holiday Activity Fund programme this summer incorporating the Household Support Fund. This will be used to provide supermarket vouchers to those in receipt of Free School Meals during the summer break alongside maximising the wider reach of the Household Support Fund to residents who need it.

Yours sincerely

Jude Green
Head of Transactional Services
Cheshire West and Chester Council