



13 December 2022

Dear Parent or Carer,

We know everyone is feeling the pinch this winter and we want to support those families in our school community who are impacted the most. If you're struggling with your finances, hopefully this letter will outline what help and support is available to you and your family as the cost-of-living crisis continues to bite.

Uniform Swap Shop

To further help with the rising costs, as a school we are going to establish a second hand uniform swap shop in school. The idea will be that on the penultimate Thursday of every half term (the first being on Thursday 2 February 2023), parents and students will be able to come to the school between 4-5.30pm to donate old uniform and exchange for better fitting uniform. If you wish to donate any unwanted uniform outside of these times, please contact Mrs Hart (Home School Link and Inclusions Officer) on admin@allhallows.net.

The St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP)

The St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) is part of an international Christian voluntary network dedicated to tackling poverty in all its forms by providing practical assistance to people in need.

Local groups can offer help with clothing, food, furniture, debt counselling or transport. They do not normally provide financial help but this depends on the capacity of the local group. For more information please visit <https://www.svp.org.uk/>

Let us know if your child is entitled to free school meals (FSM)

If your child is eligible for free school meals (FSM) you need to get them registered. This will allow them to get a free meal at school, and we'll get extra funding to support your child's learning.

Pupil Premium

Please remember that families on Pupil Premium are able to spend up to one third of their allocation on educational items.

Get free or low-cost food

If you're worried about not having enough food to feed your family, you're not alone. There are a number of places offering support. If you have a child under 4, and meet the eligibility criteria, you may be entitled to healthy start food vouchers. Find a local foodbank with these websites:

- o <https://farnham.foodbank.org.uk/>
- o <http://www.thevinecentre.org.uk/>
- o <https://farnborough.foodbank.org.uk/>
- o <https://www.getsurrey.co.uk/whats-on/whats-on-news/30-foodbanks-surrey-including-opening-15494085>
- o <https://the-hedgehogs.org.uk/>
- o <https://www.trusselltrust.org/>



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Use food waste apps and websites like Olio (for free food and household items from your local community), Too Good To Go (for low cost food from local restaurants), or Low Price Foods (food that has passed its best before date, but is still safe to consume)

See what other support you can get from your local authority. Local authorities have lots of different schemes that you might be eligible for, including:

- The holiday activities and food programme – access to food and activities over the school holidays
- Help with transport to school
- Help with the cost of uniform

Contact your local Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB)

You don't have to be a UK citizen to get support from your local [CAB](#), you just need to be a resident of the local area. The CAB can help you with:

- Getting benefits or other financial support organised
- Accessing support for essential costs (food, bills, rent)

Visit the Citizens Advice's website or contact your local branch to book an appointment.

Check you're paying the right amount of tax

Make sure you're on the right tax code. If you aren't you might be due a refund. Use [the Money Saving Expert Free Tax Calculator](#) to find out

Claim any benefits you're entitled to

Use 1 of these benefits calculators to determine whether there are any benefits you could be claiming:

- Turn2us
- Policy in Practice
- Support for migrant families – use this calculator if you are a migrant family, or if you have no recourse to public funds

You may be able to get benefits paid early if you're already feeling the squeeze - this is known as 'a short-term benefit advance' - you will need to contact the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) office [DWP](#) that's dealing with your claim.

Check you've received all the government's cost of living payments

The government's cost of living payment is available for those receiving certain benefits or tax credits. You don't need to apply for these – if you're eligible the money should go straight into your account.

If you think you're due a payment, but haven't received one – report a missing payment to the government [here](#).

Be aware of scams!

If you receive any emails, texts or phone calls asking you to fill in an application form or asking for your bank details to receive a cost of living payment, do not talk to them or send a reply. Get more information on cost of living scams on the Money Saving Expert's website.

Find out what help you can get with your energy bills

Take a look at these resources from Simple Energy Advice, the British Gas Energy Trust and the Money Saving Expert website.

Kind regards



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