

FREE SCHOOL MEALS/FINANCAIL HARDSHIP

Please note- go live date Wednesday 25th March

Help with food costs while schools are closed

We want to ensure that all our children and young people have access to a lunchtime meal.

We have the following arrangements in place to support families during this period:-

- FSM pupils_ link to Council's Voucher Scheme.
- Hardship support to families

Please read this information carefully

FSM Pupils:-

Children who would normally receive a free school meal from the school, based on household income or due to being an asylum seeker

The government has advised that they expect to have a new scheme up and running in the near future. They intend to issue vouchers directly to families. This will not be up and running for a few weeks.

Because of this, we will have to make local arrangements to support families until the **national voucher scheme is in place**. Some schools are picking this up by providing lunches and vouchers and other schools have asked the Council to make payments on their behalf.

If your school is not providing support and you normally receive free school meals due to low income please make a claim for support.

Please note we cannot make a payment if your school has alternative arrangements in place.

The contribution towards a lunchtime meal is £2.00 per day (£10 per week) for each school child or young person in the household.

We will be able to pay this money within a few days by the following methods

- A bank transfer into a nominated bank account
- A secure text message that can be used to access cash from a range of Paypoint outlets in the city
- A voucher that can be printed and can then be exchanged for cash from a range of Paypoint outlets in the city.

Parents can make an application, please submit a request via the Council's welfare Provision Scheme.

[MCC On-line Application FSM Voucher](#)

Note: DfE have confirmed that schools will be reimbursed for the cost of provision of FSM prior to the launch of the national FSM voucher scheme, given this schools will be recharged for the cost of the payments when using the Council's scheme. Should schools wish to continue with their own arrangements please send notification of opting out to finance4schools@manchester.gov.uk

Hardship:-

To support to families facing hardship

Because schools have closed and some families are facing additional financial challenges due to the Covid 19 virus, we want to provide support to families, who most need it.

We are providing a financial grant to parents and carers of the following groups of children and young people.

To qualify the family must be:

- a Manchester resident or supported by our Homelessness Service; and
- whose family has been hardest hit by the recent issues and may be waiting for benefits to be assessed or have a gap in their income due to being laid off etc.

The contribution towards a lunchtime meal is £2 per day (£10 per week) for each school age child or young person in the household.

We will be able to pay this money within a few days by the following methods

- A bank transfer into a nominated bank account
- A secure text message that can be used to access cash from a range of Paypoint outlets in the city
- A voucher that can be printed and can then be exchanged for cash from a range of Paypoint outlets in the city.

To make an application, families need to submit a request via the Council's Welfare Provision Scheme

[MCC Apply for cash grant if you are in financial crisis](#)

Note: costs of supporting families facing hardship will be met by the Local Authority, and will still be offered after the national voucher scheme for FSM is launched.