



# QUEEN'S PARK HIGH SCHOOL

23 March 2026

## Re. Changes to family support from April 2026

Please note that schools will no longer be provided with funding to provide vouchers for school holidays for parents/carers of students in receipt of free school meals.

## Please see the message below sent on behalf of Cheshire West and Chester Council

The Government's Household Support Fund will end on 31 March 2026. From 1st April 2026, this will be replaced locally by a new scheme called the Crisis and Resilience Fund.

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/benefits-and-welfare-help/cost-of-living/crisis-and-resilience-fund>

## Schools Update

We are writing to provide a further update for schools about changes to Government support for residents who need financial support.

As previously shared, the Household Support Fund will end on **31 March 2026** and will be replaced by the Crisis and Resilience Fund from **1 April 2026**.

## Families receiving Free School Meals

Families receiving Free School Meals, who previously got automatic payments during the school holidays (as part of the Household Support Fund), will now need to apply to the Crisis and Resilience fund if they need help during a financial crisis.

We understand that the holidays can be difficult for families on low income, so applications will open early, on **Wednesday 18 March 2026**, for these families.

[School Holiday Support Payment | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

While we will do our best to process applications as quickly as possible, if there is a high volume of applications, the Council cannot guarantee that approved funding will be paid by 2 April 2026. To help us prioritise your request, please submit your application **by 25 March 2026**. You can still apply after this date, but it may be less likely that your payment will be made by 2 April 2026.

If you're not in receipt of Free Schools Meals but need help with a sudden financial crisis, you can apply for the Crisis and Resilience Fund from 1 April. More information about the Crisis and Resilience Fund, and how to apply from 1 April 2026, can be found here:

[Crisis and Resilience Fund | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

*Inspiring Individuals • Empowering Minds • Defining Futures*

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## QUEEN'S PARK HIGH SCHOOL

### Get support now

If families require support now, they can also visit the Council's cost of living support webpages which bring together information about financial help, advice services, and emergency assistance:

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/benefits-and-welfare-help/cost-of-living>

There is also support available through the Holiday Activities and Food Fund (HAF): [Cheshire West Holiday Activities and Food \(HAF\) Programme | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

And on Live Well Cheshire West where residents can search for a range of services including food provision, activities, and more: [Home | Live Well Cheshire West](#)

In the meantime, school enquiries can be sent to:  
[householdsupport@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:householdsupport@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

Thank you for your continued support.

### Benefits Calculator

You may not be receiving all the financial support you're entitled to. Please see the link below to the Cheshire West and Chester Council online benefits calculator, this can quickly show whether you could claim extra help.

<https://benefits.inbest.ai/cheshirewestandchester>

**Before you start make sure you have some accurate information to hand about your;**

- *Savings*
- *Income, including your partner's (from payslips, for example)*
- *Existing benefits and pensions (including anyone living with you)*
- *Outgoings (such as rent, mortgage, childcare payments)*
- *Council Tax bill*

**Please also find attached leaflets providing information about Healthy Start and some of the other support available to residents of Cheshire West and Chester. Cost of living | Cheshire West and Chester Council**

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# Cheshire West & Chester Council

## A Helping Hand to get the Support you Need

You're not alone, others in West Cheshire are facing challenges due to the rising cost of food, energy, and other essential household costs. Here are some of the ways in which you can access the help you need.



### Emergency food - food banks and more

If you're worried about money or **struggling to afford the essentials** then ring a local **referral partner** who can give support on a variety of things which may include help with fuel, food, benefit entitlement or debt. All food parcels must be booked in advance via one of the referral partners.

#### Organisations that can help

##### Cheshire West Help in Emergencies for Local People (HELP) Scheme -

Call: Freephone number- 0808 175 3599  
(Monday to Friday 9am-5pm)

##### Citizens Advice Cheshire West -

Call: Advice line - 0808 278 7806 (available Monday to Friday 9am-4pm - Closed Bank Holidays)

##### National help through Hardship, for help with emergency food.

Call: The Helpline 0808 208 2138

For emergency food support after 5pm please call the out of hours Emergency Duty Team: 01244 977 277. All food parcels must be booked in advance via one of the referral partners.



### Money

For **money advice and support** visit the Council's cost of living page via the QR code or visit: [cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/costofliving](https://cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/costofliving)

**Help in Emergencies for Local People (HELP)** - offers local welfare assistance including support for exceptional needs, emergency funding in a crisis or help with moving out of care.

Email: [help@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:help@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)  
Call: Freephone number - 0808 175 3599  
(Monday to Friday 9am-5pm)

**Citizens Advice Cheshire West** - free, independent, confidential, and impartial advice and support to help overcome any problems including **benefits, debt, housing, relationships, and employment.**

Visit: [citizensadvicecw.org.uk](https://citizensadvicecw.org.uk) for information or to speak to someone through webchat.

Call: 0808 278 7806 (Monday to Friday 10am-4pm)



### Benefits calculator

You could be **missing out** and not receiving all the benefits you are entitled to. Use our **benefits calculator** to see if you are entitled to claim extra money.

Visit: [cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/benefits-and-welfare-help/other-benefits-and-grants](https://cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/benefits-and-welfare-help/other-benefits-and-grants)



### Mental Health, Physical Health and Wellbeing

To speak to someone about your **mental or emotional wellbeing**, call the Mental Health Helpline 0800 145 6485 (open to all ages, including children and young people, 24 hours a day seven days a week). To find local support for **mental health, physical health and wellbeing** visit: [livewell.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](https://livewell.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)



### Community Pantry and Social Supermarkets

For alternative food support you may wish to visit your local **community pantry or social supermarket**. To find out where your closest local food support is, visit **West Cheshire Food Partnership**.

Visit: [cwva.org.uk/west-cheshire-food-partnership](https://cwva.org.uk/west-cheshire-food-partnership)

If you pop into your local food support venue someone will be able to talk through how it works within your area



### Welcoming Spaces

You can stay safe, warm and connect with others in your community at some of the **Welcoming Spaces**, available in various venues across the borough. These are free to residents to use during the stated opening times.

Details of all the venues can be found online at: [www.warmwelcome.uk](https://www.warmwelcome.uk)



Cheshire West and Chester



## Home Energy

To find information on various **energy efficiency** schemes, which you may be eligible for, visit: [cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/costofliving](http://cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/costofliving)



## Local Information

To find out what is happening locally in your area, go to **Live Well Cheshire West** and input your postcode for local information, services and help available. Visit: [livewell.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](http://livewell.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)



## Skills and Employment

For information on **accessing skills and employment support or advice**, including employment mentoring, help with overcoming barriers to employment and a wide range of adult skills development opportunities visit one of the four Skills and Employment Hubs in Chester, Ellesmere Port, Northwich and Winsford.

Visit: [cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/skillsandemployment](http://cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/skillsandemployment) contact [skillsandemployment@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:skillsandemployment@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)



## Speak to someone face-to-face

Drop in at a **Resident Assistance Point** located in various Council building and libraries across the Borough. Friendly staff are available to provide guidance and advice. For the latest locations, opening days, and times, visit: [cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/contact-us/resident-assistance-points](http://cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/contact-us/resident-assistance-points).

Or email: [customerservices@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)



## Housing and homelessness

If you are **homeless** or **at risk of homelessness** and you need assistance, contact the Housing Options team as early as possible for information and support.

Visit: [cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/homelessness](http://cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/homelessness)

Call: Freephone -0808 175 3595 (Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 9am-5pm and Wed 1pm-5pm)

Out of hours emergency number-0300 123 7035 (this number is not a general housing advice number but for people who need emergency accommodation)

Speak to Citizens Advice to access **support with benefits, rent and mortgage arrears** and how to manage debt.

Call: 0808 278 7806 (Monday to Friday 10am-4pm)

To find further housing advice including applying for council or social housing, reporting disrepair in a rented property or advice on damp and mould in your home, visit: [cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/housing](http://cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/housing)



## Let's Talk

Let's Talk offers welcoming **drop-in sessions** across the Borough where residents can access face-to-face advice and support on a wide range of wellbeing issues, from **housing** and **financial challenges** to **loneliness** and **daily living**.

These community hubs are ran in partnership with local organisations to provide practical guidance tailored to **local needs**.

To find your nearest location and session times visit: [livewell.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/Services/4348](http://livewell.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/Services/4348)



## Get advice to get online

Please pop into one of the **local libraries** and speak to a member of staff about support and advice on getting online or try the library **lpad borrowing scheme**.

To find a library near you please go to the homepage [www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/libraries) and click on **Find a Library**.

## Stay in touch

To contact Cheshire West and Chester Council

Call: General Enquiries - 0300 123 8123 (Monday to Friday 8am-7pm - (excluding bank holidays and Christmas)

Out of hours emergency telephone number - 0300 123 7035

Email: [enquiries@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

Scan the QR code for cost of living support information.





**Are you missing out?**  
With eligible people not claiming Healthy Start, thousands of pounds are being unspent in west Cheshire each month

**If you're pregnant or have children under the age of four, you could get help to buy food and milk.**

Apply online for NHS Healthy Start



[www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk)

  @NHSHealthyStart



## How you could qualify

You can access the Healthy Start scheme if you're at least 10 weeks pregnant, or you have at least one child aged under four, and receive any of the following.

- Child Tax Credit (only if your family's annual income is £16,190 or less)
- Income support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Pension Credit (which includes the child addition)
- Universal Credit (only if your family's take-home pay is £408 or less per month from employment)

## What you'll get

- £4.25 each week of your pregnancy (from the 10th week of your pregnancy)
- £8.50 each week for children from birth to one year old
- £4.25 each week for children between one and four years old

