

24th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

**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

**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 you normally receive free school meals due to low income please make a claim for support.**

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](https://lwa.financialassessments.co.uk/OnlineApplication/(S(1w2yi5bjmzswqq0vvciplvtv))/Introduction.aspx?form=LWAFULL&time=637202318515007959,1584635052308)

**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](https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/info/200008/benefits_and_support/6302/apply_for_a_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.

**THESE LINKS WILL GO LIVE ON WEDNESDAY 25th MARCH**

Any problems then please contact the school office via Arbor or [admin@st-aidans.manchester.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-aidans.manchester.sch.uk) as there will not always be someone to take a phone call due to reduced staffing numbers on site.

Kind Regards,

Sarah Yates Head Teacher