

March 2026

## FSM voucher changes March 2026

Dear Parents/Carers

Holiday food vouchers (known to many parents/carers in Somerset as free school meal holiday vouchers) were part of the original Household Support Fund government package. Parents/carers who qualified for the vouchers through the HSF scheme received them as usual during the recent February half-term holiday.

However, this was the final voucher provision of its kind under the HSF scheme. And government have told Somerset Council there will be no holiday food vouchers issued under the HSF scheme after the 31 March. This means no HSF vouchers will be available for parents/carers during the Easter holidays, as these holidays fall in April this year.

The government is replacing HSF with a new Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF). This new fund will provide access to food help. Any family facing food shortages will be able to secure 'cash-first' support. However, this is a very recent announcement, and it's a new grant set-up from the government. Somerset Council is required to replace the previous voucher system with new forms of support, and this change has to be made in a short space of time.

Somerset Council is in the process of making that switch and finalising the new arrangements with a designated provider. They will be starting this scheme shortly, and it will be in place before the May half term holidays. As soon as they are able, they will provide details to schools about how families can access 'cash-first' support if they are facing food shortages.

In the meantime, and whilst arrangements are being put in place, details of a number of other existing sources of help are listed below:

For example, what is continuing this Easter, as in past holidays, is the [Happy Healthy Holidays \(HHH\) programme](#). This is a brilliant scheme and take up in Somerset has always been very high.

If any of our families have any queries please use the HHH programme, and the many other support options that are available in our communities, see the below links.

[The Local Pantry Network in Somerset](#)

[#Help4All](#)

[Community Hubs](#)

[SASP – Happy Healthy Holidays](#)

[Healthy Start – NHS – healthy food and milk](#)

[Cost of living support for Somerset residents](#)

Further information on national schemes to support families can be found at:

[Cost of living support: Overview - GOV.UK](#)

[Universal Credit: What Universal Credit is - GOV.UK](#)

[Child Benefit: How it works - GOV.UK](#)

[Free Childcare for Working Parents: Check if you're eligible - GOV.UK](#)

Kind Regards

The **School Office** Team