



Cost-of-living support for families

Dear Parent/Carers,

We know that many families are going through a tough time this winter and we want to do everything we can to help you and your child. Below is a number of ways to seek support. If you're struggling with your finances, please get in touch to let us know, as there may be things we can suggest which will help.

Contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau

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 organising other financial support
- Accessing support for essential costs (food, bills, rent)

Visit the [Citizens Advice](#) website or contact your local branch to book an appointment.

Milton Keynes Central Citizens Advice

**Acorn House 361 Midsummer Boulevard
MILTON KEYNES
Buckinghamshire
MK9 3HP**

<http://www.miltonkeynescab.org.uk/>

01908 604 475

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's](#) free tax code 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 (meaning you're not entitled to the majority of welfare benefits)

You may be able to get benefits paid early if you need cash urgently – this is known as ‘a short-term benefit advance’. You will need to contact the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) office at Milton Keynes that’s dealing with your claim.

The Department For Work and Pensions Milton Keynes

299 BOWBACK HOUSE. SILBURY BOULEVARD, [Milton Keynes](#), Buckinghamshire England, MK9 1NS

[0845 604 3719](tel:08456043719)

dwp.gov.uk

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

The government’s [cost-of-living payments](#) are 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 the [British Gas Energy Trust](#) and the [Money Saving Expert](#).

Check if your child is entitled to free school meals (FSM)

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

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you’re not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Go to www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims to check if your child is eligible. If they are, or if you’re not sure, please contact finance via reception for more support.

See what other support you can get from your local authority

Local authorities have many schemes that you might be eligible for, including:

- The [Holiday Activities and Food Programme](#) – access to food and activities over the school holidays. Note that if your child is eligible for free school meals (see above), they'll also qualify for this programme
- [Help with transport to school](#)

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](#)
- Below is a list of foodbanks and community fridges you can access.

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| The Food Bank | <p>Food parcels can be picked up from one of our serving sessions located around the city. Clients can receive a food parcel x5 times within a rolling 12 month period.</p> <p>Frank Moran Centre, Melrose Avenue, Bletchley, MK3 6PA Mon to Fri 09:00 – 16:00</p> <p>King's Community Centre, Creed St, Wolverton, MK12 5LY Mon to Fri 12:30 – 14:30</p> <p>Spotlight Centre, Serpentine Court, Lakes Estate Bletchley, MK2 3QR Mon to Fri 12:00 – 14:00</p> <p>Rowans Family Centre, 13A Moorfoot, Fullers Slade, MK11 2BD Mon to Fri 09:00 – 15:00 (appointments only – call Helpline to book)</p> <p>Moorlands Family Centre, 8 Dodkin, Beanhill, MK6 4LP Mon and Weds 14:30 – 15:30 Thurs 09.30 – 10.30</p> <p>Hedgerows Family Centre, Langland Road, Netherfield, MK6 4NP Mon to Fri 09:00 – 15:00 (appointments only – call Helpline to book)</p> <p>Milton Keynes Christian Centre, Strudwick Drive, Oldbrook, MK6 Mondays and Fridays only, 13:45 – 14:45</p> <p>Oakgrove Parish Council Office, 27 Atlas Way, Oakgrove, MK10 9SG Tuesdays and Thursdays, 14:30 – 16:00</p> <p>Unity Park (the old bus station), 401 Elder Gate, MK9 1LR Wednesdays and Thursdays 14.30 – 16.00</p> <p>Great Linford Parish Office, 1 St Leger Court, Gt Linford, MK14 5HA Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 09:00 – 16:00 Weds 09.00 – 12.00</p> <p>Agencies who can issue a foodbank voucher: http://mkfoodbank.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Agency-Listing-2.pdf</p> |
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| | <p>Website: www.mkfoodbank.org.uk</p> <p>Email: thefoodbank@mkcc.org.uk</p> |
| Community Fridge | <p>Community initiative designed to help residents and businesses reduce food waste and build stronger community bonds. Everyone is welcome to use MK Community Fridge. Go in, select the food needed and register what food has been taken...enjoy.</p> <p>OPENING TIMES</p> <p>Coffee Hall (Woughton Community Council) Tuesday 10:00-14:00 Thursday 10:00-14:00</p> <p>Conniburrow (Big Local Community Hub) Wednesday 12:30-14:30 Friday 12:30-14:30 Saturday 12:30-14:30</p> <p>Great Linford (Little Bookshop) Monday 11:00-12:30 Friday 11:00-12:30</p> <p>Netherfield (Vineyard Chapel) Tuesday 17:00-19:00 Thursday 11:00-13:00</p> <p>Westcroft (Westcroft Pavillion) Tuesday 14:00-16:00</p> <p>Wolverton (The Old Bath House) Wednesday 18:00-19:00 Saturday 12:00-13:30</p> <p>Website: www.mkcommunityfridge.org</p> <p>Email: mkcommunityfridge@gmail.com</p> |

- 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 eat)
- Get more tips on free and cheap meals from [Which](#)

Free hygiene products

- As a school, we receive free products from period poverty. If this is something that you feel you need support with, please contact our Matron (Cathie Stone) through reception.

- Food banks may offer free toiletries and sanitary products. Check with your local food bank to see what's available.
 - Find the cheapest disposable sanitary products on [Sanitary Saver](#)
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Replace or repair household items at a low cost or for free

Check if you can get broken household goods replaced or repaired by your local community.

- Get free household goods on [Freecycle](#)
 - Get help with DIY repairs at a [Repair Cafe](#)
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Find a warm space to beat the chill

Some community spaces in Milton Keynes open their doors to provide a safe and warm space for a few hours. Many also offer hot drinks and wifi.

Find a warm bank on:

- [Warm Welcome](#)
 - [Warm Spaces](#)
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Further information

- Contact [StepChange](#) for debt advice
- Contact [Shelter](#) if you're having issues related to housing
- Contact the [Salvation Army](#) for emergency assistance
- See if you're eligible for [grants from Turn2us](#)
- Single parents can get support from [Gingerbread](#)