

Dear Parents and Carers

Changes to Free School Meal Holiday Support from Autumn 2026

Sefton Council have asked us to let you know about changes to the support available to families with children eligible for benefit-related Free School Meals (FSM) during school holidays.

What is changing?

Sefton Council has provided holiday food vouchers to help eligible families during the school holidays. However, following changes to government funding, **the Summer 2026 holiday period was the last to be covered by the holiday voucher scheme.**

From Autumn 2026, the Council will no longer provide holiday food vouchers to eligible families. This is because the new Crisis and Resilience Fund focuses on helping families build financial resilience and access wider support, rather than providing holiday food vouchers.

We understand that this decision by the Council may affect families who have relied on these vouchers, and we wanted to make sure you know what other support is available.

What support is available?

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme is available to children who receive benefits-related (targeted) Free School Meals during the Christmas, Easter and Summer holidays. In addition, some smaller-scale targeted activities may be available during half-term breaks.

Children eligible for benefits-related Free School Meals can access the HAF programme. A limited number of places may also be available for families who do not receive benefits-related Free School Meals. Parents and carers are encouraged to contact the HAF team directly for further information.

The programme combines healthy food provision with enrichment activities, social opportunities, and wider wellbeing support for children and young people.

More information is available online by visiting [Holiday, Activities and Food Programme \(HAF\)](#) and for more information and enquiries, parents can contact the HAF team by email holidayactivityandfoodprogramme@sefton.gov.uk

Financial Support

Families experiencing financial hardship are encouraged to visit www.sefton.gov.uk/costofliving for information about the support available to them.

It is important to note that the decision to stop the Free School Meal Holiday Support vouchers has been made by the Council in response to changes in Government Funding. Schools themselves have only ever been responsible for the distribution of the vouchers and have played no part in the decision to bring the voucher scheme to an end.

Kind regards

David Hird

Headteacher