



Co-op Academy
Manchester

Co-op Academy Manchester

Below is a letter from Manchester City Council. Academy staff have added some notes in red.

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 - the school has arranged gift cards with Co-op for the academy's Free School Meals children, so the support from the Council is not available.
- Hardship support to families - this is available to you.

Please read this information carefully

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 your school is not providing support and you normally receive free school meals due to low income please make a claim for support.

Please note we cannot make a payment if your school has alternative arrangements in place.

The academy is posting out the Co-op gift cards to families eligible for Free School Meals. They will be topped up automatically until the scheme ends. Let us know if you are eligible and have not received them by the end of the week.

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.