

Devon County Council's Free School Meals holiday voucher scheme – Christmas Break 2021

About the scheme

Devon County Council is supporting families of children who currently receive free school meals during term time with supermarket vouchers to help buy food during the Christmas Break.

Usually, each child is issued with a £15 voucher per week, however this is being doubled for the Christmas scheme, with an extra one-off £30 supermarket voucher. This means that you will be receiving a £60 voucher per child for the two-weeks to help with the additional financial pressure the festive period can bring. These vouchers can be used at the following stores; Sainsburys, Tesco, Morrison's, Asda, Aldi, M&S Food and Waitrose to purchase food over the Christmas Holidays to replace the meals your child would have received at school during the day. Please note that Tesco/Morrisons/ALDI vouchers can only be used in-store.

If you have more than one child entitled to free school meals, you should receive a unique code for each child, as the holiday vouchers are issued separately.

Getting the vouchers

Devon County Council has partnered with an organisation called Black Hawk Network to help us distribute these vouchers as quickly as possible via their 'Select' website because they have lots of experience managing voucher schemes like this and are working with several other local authorities too.

- To get your vouchers you will need to visit a website called 'Select' (www.select-your-reward.co.uk) and input your unique code.
- You will then be able to choose your preferred supermarket and add your vouchers to your basket.
- Please then checkout of the 'Select' website by providing an email address for them to send you your chosen supermarket vouchers electronically. There is no option to receive physical vouchers by post.
- Once you have received the vouchers to your email inbox, you can save them to your phone or tablet to use online (depending on the supermarket) or show at the checkout in store. Alternatively, you can print the vouchers off to give to the cashier.

What if I need some help?

If you have not yet received your Christmas Voucher, please follow the steps below:

Until the 17 th December	Please contact the School your child attends before they break up for the Christmas Break. Please note, that if the school are responsible for issuing the codes and you do not contact them before they have broken up, you may not receive your code until they return in January.
Until the 24 th December	Any problems with your codes, please contact the Free School meals team at: freeschoolmeals@devon.gov.uk
Until the 3 rd January	For any urgent queries whilst the School and the FSM team are out of the office, please contact the Customer Service Centre on 0345 155 1019.

If you are struggling to get your vouchers because you don't have access to the internet or a mobile device to receive and store the vouchers on, and don't have any friends or family to help, please contact Devon County Council's education helpline on 0345 155 1019.

Arrangements are in place to support you if you cannot shop, either in store or online, at one of the supermarkets where the vouchers can be spent. Again, please call Devon County Council's education helpline on 0345 155 1019.

Further information

If your child has siblings attending school in a neighbouring authority (for example Plymouth or Torbay) who are also receiving free school meals, the local authority their school is located within will have arrangements to support them over the holidays.

If you received a voucher code for the October half-term and haven't used it to get your supermarket vouchers via Black Hawk's 'Select' website yet, please do so by Tuesday 11th January 2022. Once this date has passed, the scheme will expire, and we will not be backdating any payments.

More detailed information about the free school meals holiday voucher scheme, including how to use them and what to do if there's a problem, is available on Devon County Council's website. Please visit devon.cc/holidayvouchers or www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/document/free-school-meals-holiday-voucher-scheme.

There are also some useful FAQs on the Select website along with contact details for any technical support if you have a problem using the codes and accessing your vouchers. Please visit www.select-your-reward.co.uk.

If you're experiencing severe financial hardship, support is available. Please visit devon.cc/support or www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/document/support-for-people-and-families for information about how to access local financial support, where to find foodbanks and community larders and what to do if you're on a low income and need to self-isolate.

Finally, if you have received this message in error, please let us know by calling 0345 155 1019 or emailing freeschoolmeals@devon.gov.uk so we can make sure this vital support gets to the right family.