



Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2022

## **Financial Support Opportunities and Information**

Dear Parent / Carer,

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some information on financial supports that you may find helpful, particularly in the current climate where we are experiencing rising costs for food, fuel and energy payments. I hope you find this useful and please do not hesitate to get in touch if I can help you in any way.

### **Cost of Living Support**

Aberdeenshire council have a page on their website dedicated to providing support / links for energy bills, council tax, food banks and more. Access their page : <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/communities-and-events/cost-of-living/>

### **Free School Meals and Clothing Grant**

Free school meals provide children with **£1.50 at break time and £2.85 at lunch**. Money does not roll over after break and lunch. Children are eligible for free school meals if their parents (or carers) are in receipt of a qualifying benefit:

- Income Support (IS)
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)
- Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit)
- Any income related element of Employment Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (CTC), but not Working Tax Credit (WTC), and have an income of less than £17,005
- Both Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit with an income of less than £7,920
- Support under Part VI of the [Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#)
- Universal Credit with a monthly net pay from your employer of less than £660 (this is based on your actual net pay, not the figure determined by Universal Credit)

Further information and the application form can be accessed :

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/school-info/assistance/free-school-meals/>

### **Education Maintenance Allowance**

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is an allowance of £30 per week, which can be paid to eligible students who stay on in education after the age of 16 years. Your EMA is paid every 2 weeks during school term time and it is not paid during the holidays. You can apply using this link but please contact me directly if you need any help making the application.

<https://aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/school-info/assistance/ema/>

## **Worrying About Money? – Financial Advice and Support Leaflet.**

Please find attached a support leaflet that provides information on where you can access support within Aberdeenshire. [Aberdeenshire - Worried about Money? \(worryingaboutmoney.co.uk\)](http://worryingaboutmoney.co.uk)

## **Cash For Kids Emergency Fund**

This is a fund that we can apply for on your behalf, there is no limit to the number of applications that can be made by the school and it can be used to cover costs for essential items e.g. heating, food, clothes, phone and electricity top ups etc.

Each application, if accepted, will receive a minimum of £100 depending on your circumstances and is usually provided within 7 days. In order to qualify for this funding you must be experiencing / affected by poverty and your children must be between 0-18 years old and live in Aberdeen or Aberdeenshire. We would require a brief explanation of what you would use this payment for and you will need to provide us with evidence / receipts of your spending.

**Free Bus Travel : Young Scot Card - We can process this on your behalf. Please contact the school office directly for the relevant forms or access the links below.**

Pupils Under 16 :

Step-by-step instructions on how parents/carers can request a replacement National Entitlement Card (NEC) or Young Scot NEC with free bus travel for their child using [getyournec.scot](http://getyournec.scot). This shows the process for requesting a replacement card for a child aged 5-15 who already has a Young Scot card or other National Entitlement Card. : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qww1k54WM8M>

Applications for Pupils Over 16 :

Use the following link and download the 'Transport Scotland's Pass Collect App' - <https://www.transport.gov.scot/concessionary-travel/young-persons-free-bus-travel-scheme/#70015>

There is a short video to explain the stages of how to apply.

**Period Products** : The school can provide these for you if required or you can access products via Aberdeenshire council on : <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/communities-and-events/sanitary-products/>

## **School Uniform**

We are aware that the purchase of school uniform can place a burden on families. We do have a small amount of uniform items available at reception and can provided to you on a first come, first served basis. However, we are aware that this may not meet current demand and the emergency fund can be used to apply for funding to purchase new uniform items if required. Please make contact with a me directly if you would like to check specific uniform items.

## **Uniform Swap**

To help all pupils in the school and reduce wastage we also accept donations of outgrown school uniform. You can drop off any item off uniform at the school reception.

## Further Supports

Brechin Community Pantry: [Brechin Community Pantry](#) | [Community](#) | [Pantry](#)

Laurencekirk

### Community Larders, Pantries & Foodbanks

Correct at time of publishing April 2021

#### Auchenblae Community Larder Auchenblae Church Hall, AB30 1WQ

07527 585327 / 01561 320269 / [auchenblaesg@gmail.com](mailto:auchenblaesg@gmail.com)  
Tuesday 11am – noon

#### Bervie Pantry 75 King Street, DD10 0RB 07962 002710

Facebook - Bervie Pantry  
Monday - Saturday 2 hours/day  
shared on Facebook page each Sunday

#### Stonehaven Far & Wide Food Bank

07765 548649 / [barbara.farandwide@talk21.com](mailto:barbara.farandwide@talk21.com)  
Referral system. Please contact Citizen's Advice, Social Work  
or the Far & Wide shop

#### Fetterly Larder

Fettercairn Church Hall, AB30 1XX  
07860 676630 / [fetterlylarder@gmail.com](mailto:fetterlylarder@gmail.com)  
Thursday 2pm - 3pm

#### Johnshaven Larder

Johnshaven Small Village Hall, 15 Mid Street, DD10 0HB  
07980 610767 / [bjcommunitycouncil@gmail.com](mailto:bjcommunitycouncil@gmail.com)  
Tuesday 10am - noon

#### Luthermuir Larder

Luthermuir Village Hall, AB30 1YR  
01674 840336 / [Luthermuir.Hall@gmail.com](mailto:Luthermuir.Hall@gmail.com)  
Tuesday 12.15pm - 1.15pm  
Wednesday 6pm - 8pm

#### Marykirk Community Larder

Marykirk Village Hall, Main Road, AB30 1UT  
07733 400808 / [helen9927@aol.com](mailto:helen9927@aol.com)  
Wednesday 2.30pm - 3.30pm  
Thursday 6.30pm - 7.30pm  
Friday 11am – noon

#### Mearns Community Larder

The Venue, 84 High Street, AB30 1BJ  
07940 257061 / 07730 013255  
Tuesday 2pm - 4pm

#### South Aberdeenshire Foodbank

07926 969408 / [www.aberdeenshiresouth.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.aberdeenshiresouth.foodbank.org.uk)  
Referral system  
Contact the Foodbank for more information

#### Storehouse, Catalyst Vineyard Church Mearns

07572 832103 / [kirsty.broadley@catalyst.vin](mailto:kirsty.broadley@catalyst.vin)  
Call or email for opening times

#### Storehouse, Catalyst Vineyard Church Stonehaven

Stonehaven Community Centre, Robert Street, AB39 2DH  
enter by Robert Street carpark  
07983 090515 / [transform.stonehaven@catalyst.vin](mailto:transform.stonehaven@catalyst.vin)  
Call or email for opening times

#### The Haven

Stonehaven Community Centre, Robert Street, AB39 2DH  
enter by Robert Street carpark  
Julia - 07473 388198 / [HavenScotland@gmail.com](mailto:HavenScotland@gmail.com)  
Monday 10am - noon  
Tuesday noon - 2pm  
Wednesday 1pm – 3pm  
Thursday 2pm - 4pm  
Friday 5pm - 7pm  
Saturday 10am - noon

#### The Larder - Portlethen & Surrounding Areas

Porty Cabin, Cookston Road, AB12 4PT  
07376 133870

[c19portlethenhelp@gmail.com](mailto:c19portlethenhelp@gmail.com)  
Monday 6pm - 8pm  
Wednesday 4pm - 6pm  
Thursday 10am - noon  
Friday 2pm - 5pm  
Saturday 10am - 12.30pm

#### Grampian Coronavirus Assistance Hub

If you need  
help, support  
or advice.

Anywhere in Aberdeen,  
Aberdeenshire or Moray.

0808 196 3384  
[www.gcah.org.uk](http://www.gcah.org.uk)

#### Grampian Psychological Resilience Hub

For anyone who is struggling with the impact of the COVID-19  
pandemic, affecting their psychological wellbeing

[www.nhsgrampian.org/covid-19/covid-19-public-information/  
subpages/mental-health-support/what-is-the-grampian-  
psychological-resilience-hub](http://www.nhsgrampian.org/covid-19/covid-19-public-information/subpages/mental-health-support/what-is-the-grampian-psychological-resilience-hub)

Kind regards,



**David Black**

PT Equity and Life Skills

Mearns Academy

[David.black@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:David.black@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

## Step 3: Where can I get help?

### Scottish Welfare Fund

Crisis grants to cover the cost of an emergency  
01467 537 400  
[www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/benefits-and-grants/welfare-reform/scottish-welfare-fund](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/benefits-and-grants/welfare-reform/scottish-welfare-fund)

### Social Security Scotland

You may be eligible for support from Social Security Scotland. For example, Scottish Child Payment, Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods can help with the costs of having a child.  
[mygov.scot/benefits](http://mygov.scot/benefits) | 0800 182 2222 (freephone)

Each of these services offer free and confidential advice

### Citizens Advice Bureau

Advice on issues such as benefits, debt, money, housing and employment and more

#### North West Aberdeenshire

01888 562 495 | [adviser@nwacab.org.uk](mailto:adviser@nwacab.org.uk)  
[www.nwacab.org.uk](http://www.nwacab.org.uk)

#### South West Aberdeenshire

01224 747 714 | [enquiries@swacab.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@swacab.org.uk)  
[www.swacab.org.uk](http://www.swacab.org.uk)

#### Banff and Buchan

01779 471 515 | [www.banffandbuchancab.org.uk](http://www.banffandbuchancab.org.uk)  
[bureau@aberdeenshirecab.casonline.org.uk](mailto:bureau@aberdeenshirecab.casonline.org.uk)

#### Kincardine and Mearns

01569 766 578 | [www.kamcab.org.uk](http://www.kamcab.org.uk)  
[bureau@kamcab.casonline.org.uk](mailto:bureau@kamcab.casonline.org.uk)

Help with options: **1 2 3 4 5 6**

### Aberdeenshire Council: Support and Advice Team

Help with Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, Blue Badges, Free School Meals, School Clothing Grants and Scottish Welfare fund enquiries  
03456 081 200 | [asat@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:asat@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)  
[www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

Help with options: **1 2 3 4 5 6**

## Other Support

### PACE

Help for those facing redundancy  
0800 917 8000  
[www.redundancyscotland.co.uk](http://www.redundancyscotland.co.uk)

### SCARF

Advice and support for energy and fuel issues  
01224 213005  
[www.scarf.org.uk](http://www.scarf.org.uk)

### Home Energy Scotland

Free, impartial energy efficiency advice to help save on bills and stay warm at home  
0808 808 2282  
[www.homeenergyscotland.org](http://www.homeenergyscotland.org)

### Turn2Us

Information and financial support  
0808 802 2000 (Freephone)  
[www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)  
[benefits-calculator.turn2us.org.uk](http://benefits-calculator.turn2us.org.uk)

### Step Change

Free debt advice and money management  
0800 138 1111  
[www.stepchange.org](http://www.stepchange.org)

### Shelter

Free housing advice  
0808 800 4444 (Freephone)  
[scotland.shelter.org.uk](http://scotland.shelter.org.uk)

### Breathing Space

Confidential phoneline for anyone feeling low, anxious or depressed  
0800 83 85 87  
[www.breathingspace.scot](http://www.breathingspace.scot)

Updated on 10/11/21

Share your experience of using this guide:  
[www.bit.ly/moneyadvicefeedback](http://www.bit.ly/moneyadvicefeedback)

# Worrying About Money?

Financial advice and support is available if you're struggling to make ends meet

Follow these steps to find out where to get help in Aberdeenshire



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## Step 1: What's the problem?

### I suddenly have no money

- Lost job/reduced hours
- Lost money/unexpected expense
- Disaster (e.g. flood or fire)
- Relationship breakdown
- Money stopped (e.g. failed a medical)
- Sanctioned - see option 5

See options **1 2 5 6**

### I am waiting on a benefit payment/decision

- Made a new claim for benefit
- Benefit payment is delayed
- Waiting for a benefit decision

See options **1 4**

### My money doesn't stretch far enough

- Deciding between food/fuel/mobile credit
- Low income or zero hours contract
- Statutory Sick Pay too low to cover costs
- Not sure if eligible for support
- Change of circumstance (e.g. new baby/bereavement/illness/left partner)

See option **2**

### I have debt

- Rent or Council Tax arrears
- Gas or electricity
- Credit or store cards
- Personal loans and overdrafts
- Owe friends and family
- Benefit repayments

See option **3**

## Step 2: What are some options?

### 1 Scottish Welfare Fund

People on low incomes may be able to get a **crisis grant** from the Council.

This is a payment to help you cope during an emergency or disaster, or due to unexpected expenses. Crisis grants do not have to be paid back (not a loan).

### 2 Maximise Your Income

Anyone who is struggling financially can get a benefit check and speak to an advisor for free and confidential advice.

A **benefit check** can ensure that you are receiving all the money you're entitled to, especially if your circumstances have changed recently. Speaking to an advisor could also help you **find cheaper deals** on things like gas and electricity and **make sure you're not missing out** on things like school clothing grants or free school meals.

### 3 Debt Advice

Debt can happen to anyone. Free advice and support can help you find ways to manage your debts and reduce how much you pay each month.

### 4 Benefit Advance

If you have made a new claim for benefit and are in financial hardship while you wait for your first payment, you may be able to get an advance to afford things like rent or food. It's important to get advice before taking out an advance. Benefit advances must be paid back, and the money will be taken from your future benefit payments (a loan).

### 5 Hardship Payment

If you have been sanctioned, you may be able to request a hardship payment from the Jobcentre. Hardship payments are not always paid immediately, and they're not available to everyone. Hardship payments of Universal Credit need to be paid back (a loan), but hardship payments of Job Seekers Allowance or Employment Support Allowance do not (not a loan).

### 6 Challenge a Decision

You can challenge a benefit decision if your benefit has been stopped / sanctioned / reduced / refused or you have been overpaid. Most benefit decisions need to be challenged within one month.

Step 3: Where can I get help with these options?

