

Cost of living support

Find out what help and support is available to you and your family as the cost-of-living crisis continues to bite.

We know everyone is feeling the pinch this winter and we want to support those families in our school community who are impacted the most. There is support available within our local community, so if you're struggling with your finances, please do look at the information below, as there may be things suggested which will help. We want to do everything we can to help you and your child through this difficult winter.

Contact your local Citizen's Advice Bureau or Family Hub

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

Visit the [Citizens Advice's](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/) website or contact your local branch to book an appointment

<https://www.citizensadvicekingston.org.uk/>



Phone us for help



02031660953

(Monday to Thursday from 9-4)

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

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St Mary's C of E Primary School



You may be able to get benefits paid early if you're already feeling the squeeze - this is known as 'a short-term benefit advance' - you will need to contact the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) office that's dealing with your claim.

Kingston Jobcentre Plus
Guildhall 2
High Street
Kingston-upon-Thames
KT1 1EA
Telephone: 0800 169 0190



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

The government's [cost of living payment](#) is 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](#) website.

Let us know if your child is entitled to free school meals (FSM)

If your child is eligible for free school meals (FSM) you need to get them registered. This will allow them to get a free meal at school, and we'll get extra funding to support your child's learning. Find out if your child is eligible and apply for free school meals on the Kingston Borough website https://www.kingston.gov.uk/free_school_meals

If your child is eligible for free school meals, they'll also qualify for the Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF) which gives access to food and activities during the school holidays. In Kingston and Richmond this is known as the F.U.E.L scheme and further details can be found [here](#)



See what other support you can get from your local authority

Kingston Council Cost of Living Support Hub has information and links to useful organisations who can help with food and heating costs as well as health and wellbeing support and support for families and children. <https://www.kingston.gov.uk/benefits-5/support-rising-living-costs>

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[Connected Kingston](#) is a site dedicated to helping Kingston residents find local activities and navigate local services. It is run by the council and Kingston Voluntary Action in conjunction with local charities and statutory organisations.



Warm coats and winter shoes for kids

You can contact Chessington Children's Centre on 020 8397 2006 (option 5) to find out how to donate and what is available for collection.

Drop-in after Drop-Off runs from 8.30am every Monday in the St Mary's Centre Café. All most welcome!



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.



The Community Food Pantry at **St Mary's Centre** Church Lane KT9 2DR is open every Saturday 10am-12noon for anyone in need of a little help



The Kings Centre
Coppard Gardens KT9 2GZ
Wednesday 9-10am
PHONE: 020 8391 5522

You can contact Kingston Food Bank Service through their website www.kingston.foodbank.org.uk email: info@kingston.foodbank.org.uk or telephone 020 8391 1100

Ewell Family Centre run a **community fridge** scheme which is open Monday-Friday 11am-3pm. Food available is advertised on the Ewell Family Centre Facebook page and details of how to use the fridge can be found [here](#)

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 consume) If you have a child under 4, and meet the eligibility criteria, you may be entitled to [healthy start food vouchers](#)

Further information

- Contact [StepChange](#), if you're struggling with debt
- Contact [Shelter](#) if you're having issues related to housing
- Get free household goods on [Freecycle](#)
- Contact the [Salvation Army](#) for emergency assistance
- See if you're eligible for [grants from Turn2us](#)
- Single parents can get support from [Gingerbread](#)

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