

County Council Report

December 2021

Enriching experiences and a nutritious lunch are being made available in the Christmas holidays for the children of families receiving benefits-related free school meals.

The Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme offers fun with friends and free food for primary and secondary school children in both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The sessions will include a healthy meal, a variety of exciting activities or sports and the opportunity to socialise with other children. Any child receiving benefits-related free school meals is eligible for the programme.

Funded by the Department for Education (DfE) for the next three years, the HAF scheme enables local authorities to coordinate free holiday childcare and enriching experiences locally. The programme will be delivered by approved providers, co-ordinated by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council.

Each eligible child will be able to access up to 16 hours of free holiday childcare or enriching experiences through the school Christmas holiday period. Bookings have already opened and information about how to book with participating providers can be found at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/haf and [Early Years & Childcare | Peterborough Information Network](#)

As part of the HAF programme, eligible children will be able to access:

- Fun and enriching play opportunities or new experiences that provide children with new skills and knowledge.
- At least one meal a day.
- Guidance on healthy eating and getting children involved in food preparation and cooking.
- Support for parents, carers or other family members with guidance on how to source, prepare and cook nutritious and low-cost food.
- Information and signposting to other services and support which might be helpful.

County Council Report

December 2021

Both councils are working with local schools, voluntary and community organisations, and childcare providers to deliver the HAF programme.

Special help will again be made available this Christmas for eligible families as they continue to recover from the pandemic

Cambridgeshire County Council is continuing to operate the Household Support Fund, which runs until March 2022.

As in previous holidays, financial support will be offered to vulnerable families through the Direct Food Voucher Scheme. This will cover the Christmas holiday from 20 December until 4 January.

The scheme offers parents a voucher for a choice of supermarkets. These vouchers will be sent to eligible families automatically using school data and information held by the local authority. Those eligible for the voucher will be pupils who meet the following criteria:

- Early Years Pupil Premium
- Children eligible for income related funded two-year-old education
- Eligible for Free School Meals
- Students eligible for 16+ bursary.

The Council will issue each child or young person, eligible on or before the 6 December, with a £30 supermarket voucher on December 17 to cover the holiday period. The voucher will be sent by email and/or text to the nominated parent or carer. The voucher does not need to be used in a single shopping trip and once claimed will last for at least a year.

Wider forms of support are also available for families and individuals over the winter months, whether or not they are eligible for the Direct Food Voucher Scheme. This could take the form of access to food, household heating, and other essential supplies.

County Council Report

December 2021

Details of the support available and how to access it can be found at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/household-support-fund

Omicron case detected in Cambridgeshire

Jyoti Atri, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's Director of Public Health, said:

"We are working closely with UKHSA to identify any close contacts of the confirmed case who has recently returned to the UK from an area where Omicron is circulating. We are providing support and advice to make sure that they are self-isolating appropriately while their PCR tests are carried out.

"Omicron is a variant that we are concerned about as we need to understand how much protection the current vaccines offer against this variant, if it is more transmissible or has a worse effect on people than the current variants. Scientists are currently studying the virus and we will know more in the coming weeks.

"Protective measures - such as compulsory face coverings in public indoor spaces such as shops and public transport, and new regulations for people returning from abroad - are being put in place to buy time, while we learn more about this variant and while the booster vaccination programme is extended.

"So please make sure that that you observe these measures, and if you haven't done so already, you have had your initial two vaccinations. Please also book your booster as soon as you are eligible, as this remains the best protection for you, people you love and the wider community.

"www.thevaccinators.co.uk has all the available venues and times across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and is being regularly updated with new sites and times as they become available."

County Council Report

December 2021

Cost of on-street parking in Cambridge will increase

The cost of on-street parking in Cambridge will increase slightly in order to cover the cost of the county's parking services and encourage people to make more sustainable travel choices.

A small increase on all current pay and display parking and visitor and resident parking sites will be introduced to cover the day-to-day running of Cambridgeshire County Council's parking services and contractor enforcement costs, which have risen due to inflation.

The council hopes the changes will help control traffic in areas where the city is particularly busy, as well as encouraging greener travel. As part of Cambridgeshire County Council's commitment to tackling climate change, the council continues to promote the Park & Ride, Guided Busway, other forms of public transport and active travel.

As a result of the changes, on-street pay and display parking charges will increase by 20p for premium parking areas in Cambridge city centre and 10p for other locations. This will come into effect on Monday, 6th December, 2021. Visitor permits will increase by £1 and resident parking permits by £2-£4, both of which will come in effect on Monday, 10th January 2022. Letters will be sent to residents with more information next week.

Parking fees have not increased in Cambridgeshire since 2018. Earlier this year, members of the Highways and Transport Committee agreed to review the charges to ensure they are in line with running costs.

A further speed reduction is being implemented on the Guided Busway.

The speed limit on the busway between Long Road Bridge and the railway station, in both directions, will now be 15mph.

The County Council has committed to undertake a full and detailed safety review of the busway from independent experts

County Council Report

December 2021

following the latest traffic incident. We have a duty to keep matters under continuous review and in considering these matters we have thought again about realistic measures we feel able to take to reduce the risk further and decided to implement a further speed restriction.

Cambridgeshire will show its support for domestic abuse survivors at a virtual flag-raising ceremony.

November 25 is White Ribbon Day and International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. White Ribbon is a charity engaging with men and boys to end violence against women. And to mark the occasion a White Ribbon flag will be raised outside Cambridgeshire County Council's New Shire Hall offices which will be live-streamed across the authority's social media channels.

The county council is a White Ribbon accredited organisation, which requires implementing action plans to support employees and signing up ambassadors to spread messages.

The accreditation was recently extended for another three years, while new ambassadors include Anthony York from Boxing Futures which highlights the impact sport can have in tackling domestic abuse.