



## Cost of living support

Find out what support is available to help you and your family get through the cost-of-living crisis.

### Let us know if you're in financial difficulty

Alumwell Nursery School – 01922 721264 Sheena Stewart-Warwick - 07738 546929

Alumwell Infant School – 01922 720886 Katie Bourne - 07522 165000

Alumwell Junior School – 01922 721391 Carol Holmes - 07762 835775

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### Contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau or Family Hub

#### Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB)

The CAB can help you with:

- Getting benefits or organising other financial support
- Accessing support for essential costs (food, bills, rent)

Walsall Branch – 01922 600700 <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

#### Family Hub

South and Central Hub – Birchill's Street (behind fire station) – 01922 654545

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### 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.

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### Claim any benefits you're entitled to

Use one of these benefits calculators to determine whether there are any benefits you could be claiming:

- [Turn2us https://benefits-calculator.turn2us.org.uk/](https://benefits-calculator.turn2us.org.uk/)
- [Policy in Practice https://www.betteroffcalculator.co.uk/login](https://www.betteroffcalculator.co.uk/login)
- [Support for migrant families https://migrantfamilies.nrpfnetwork.org.uk/](https://migrantfamilies.nrpfnetwork.org.uk/) – use this calculator if you are a migrant family, or if you have no recourse to public funds (meaning you're not entitled to the majority of welfare benefits)

You may be able to get benefits paid early if you need cash urgently – this is known as 'a short-term benefit advance'. You will need to go onto your Universal Credit portal (if you have one), or contact the Walsall Benefits Service at 0300 555 2855. Walsall Job Centre can also be contacted on 0800 169 0190.

One Walsall, 16-16A Bridge Street, can also be contacted for advice on 01922 619840.

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

The government's [cost-of-living payments](#) are 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. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/cost-of-living-payment>

**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.

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### 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](#).

<https://britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/bounce-back-checklist/>

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities/energy-saving-myths/>

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### Check if your child is entitled to free school meals (FSM)

If your child is eligible for FSM you need to get them registered. This will allow them to get a free meal at school and, as a school, we'll get extra funding (known as the pupil premium) to support your child's learning.

Go to <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals> to see if you are eligible. If you require help please contact your Family Support Worker.

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### See what other support you can get from your local authority

Walsall Council – 01922 650000

Local authorities have many schemes that you might be eligible for, including:

- The [Holiday Activities and Food Programme](#) (HAF) – access to food and activities over the school holidays. Note that if your child is eligible for free school meals (see above), they'll also qualify for this programme
- [Help with transport to school - https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/transport/#Who-is-entitled-to-free-school-transport](https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/transport/#Who-is-entitled-to-free-school-transport)



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### Get free or low-cost food

- If you have a child under 4, and meet the eligibility criteria, you may be entitled to [healthy start food vouchers](#)
- Contact the family support worker at your child's school for a food bank voucher. GPs, health visitors and some community buildings can also provide vouchers. Find your local food bank: [Black Country Foodbank](#), [Bankuet](#), [The Independent Food Aid Network](#), the [Trussell Trust](#), or your local [community fridge](#)
- 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 eat).
- Become a member of a community shop. These organisations sell food to their members at a reduced price. Some shops are free to join if you meet certain criteria, and others ask for a small contribution. Pleck Pantry (321 Wednesbury Road, Open Wednesdays 11-3) can provide cheap food for families.
- Find other community shops near you by checking these websites: [Community Shop](#), [Your Local Pantry](#), [Community Grocery](#)

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### Free hygiene products

- Food banks may offer free toiletries and sanitary products. Check with your local food bank to see what's available (see above).
- Most major supermarkets will provide free sanitary supplies if you ask a member of staff for a "white envelope".
- Find the cheapest disposable sanitary products on [Sanitary Saver](#)

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### Replace or repair household items at a low cost or for free

Check if you can get broken household goods replaced or repaired by your local community.

- Get free household goods on [Freecycle](#)
- Get help with DIY repairs at a [Repair Cafe](#)

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### Find a warm space to beat the chill

Some community spaces open their doors to provide a safe and warm space for a few hours. Many also offer hot drinks and WiFi.

Walsall Warm Spaces – [Walsall Community Network](#).

Find a warm space on:

- [Warm Welcome https://www.warmwelcome.uk/](https://www.warmwelcome.uk/)
- [Warm Spaces https://warmspaces.org/spaces](https://warmspaces.org/spaces)