

Friday 23rd September 2022

Dear Birchfield family,

In response to parent enquiries about local services that can offer help and support to families, we have put together the following information.

The resources listed here may be beneficial to you and your wider family at this time. Please note the school is not recommending any organisation and cannot provide any further information about the services that are offered than the information that is provided below.

Financial Support

Benefits: Citizen Advice offer a tool to check which benefits (e.g., Universal Credit and Child Tax Credit) you could be entitled to and can provide support in the initial stages of applying for benefit. Find further information here at [Citizen Advice – Benefits](#) or ring the free Help to Claim phone service on 0800 144 8 444, advisers are available 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday and a translator can be requested.

Birmingham Settlement offer the following services within the local area: advice, advocacy, and support for the local community as well as advice on benefits, specialist advice on money and debt. Furthermore, they provide training, volunteering, and employment support projects for residents. Visit [Birmingham Settlement](#) for further information or ring 0121 250 0765.

Food

Food Banks: Foodbanks in Birmingham work on a referral system. Individuals should contact Birmingham City council's contact centre 0121 216 3030 to book a referral. Their opening hours are Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm. Referral can also be made online at [Food Bank Voucher Request](#)

Healthy Start Vouchers: If an individual is more than 10+ weeks pregnant/ has a child under 4 and are on a low income they may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk. Individuals can find further information and apply at [Healthy Start Vouchers](#)

Free School Meals:

Parents may be eligible for free school meals for their children if they meet certain criteria. For more information the criteria see [Birmingham Free School Meals](#). Parents can collect a Free School Meal application form from the school's Front Office and be supported by the office team to check for eligibility.

Household Costs

Energy: Individuals should speak to their energy providers as several suppliers offer grants to help with energy costs. Individuals may also be eligible for Winter Fuel Payments, Warm Home Discount and or Cold Weather Payments. For more information visit [Ofgem](#).



Relationships

Parenting Courses: Birmingham City council have pre-paid for every parent in Birmingham to access a parenting course. Just enter the access code "COMMUNITY" on [Our Place](#) to claim. There are courses for parents, carers, and grandparents of children from bump to nineteen.

Domestic abuse: Bharosa is a domestic abuse service, particularly for those from a South Asian background living in Birmingham. Bharosa provides a free service which is confidential and unbiased for women over the age of sixteen, who are experiencing any form of domestic abuse. The service they provide is culturally appropriate and sensitive to the needs of the women that they support, and in a range of cultural languages. Bharosa is available from 9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am to 4 pm on Fridays on 0121 303 0368/0369 or you can email bharosa@birmingham.gov.uk

Mental Health

Mind Birmingham provides advice and information to people experiencing mental health difficulties, their families, professionals and the wider public. The service is open 24hrs a day, every day on 0121 262 3555 or 0800 915 9292. The helpline can also offer advice, information and signposting relating to health and social care and a range of other issues.

- Feeling Low or Anxious? | Call us to talk about your feelings of low mood, depression, anxiety, self-harm, or suicide.
- Emotional and Wellbeing Support | Our team can provide practical emotional and wellbeing support over the phone or through our wellbeing services
- Access to Counselling | Our team can refer you for telephone counselling sessions
- Support for Keyworkers | We are linked to services providing support specifically for Keyworkers

Kind regards,



Z. Thewlis
Head of school

