

Financial support

for children and families, within the Warwick district



This information has been collated to support families and is correct at the current time (May 2025), please check eligibility and availability with local services.

Food assistance

Free School Meals

Free School Meals Eligibility:

- Children from low-income families (means-tested) on Universal Credit with income < £400/week.
- All infant school children in England (Reception to Year 2).

Free Breakfast Club:

Currently 750 UK primary schools offer 30-minute free breakfast club and before-school childcare. Contact your school to check availability.

Healthy start scheme

- Pregnant women and parents with children under 4 on a low income may be eligible to access this.
- Must be on universal credit and have income less than **£400** per week.
- Help available: Free vouchers for milk, fruit, vegetables, infant formula and vitamins

Langar aid and Langar outreach

- Langar Aid provides **food bags** to families in need through the Lillington and Kingsway Children and Family Centres.

If you are struggling and feel a food bag would be helpful, please speak to a member of the Children and Family Centre staff.

Langar outreach regularly provides free cooked meals in various locations within **leamington spa**. This service is available to anyone, no referral needed.

Sydni centre

- Fresh fruit and veg bags at the Sydni centre.
- This is available every week, for all to buy or healthy start vouchers accepted.
- **£7** for a big bag or **£5** for a small bag.
- To order a bag please call **01926422071** or email food@sydni.org

Brunswick hub

Brunswick hub support families in crisis.

£5 charge for **£20** worth of basic food items.

Call **01926422123** to talk to a member of their team to order.

Food banks

Please let children and family centre staff know if you are struggling and need a food bank voucher.

Heathcote Parish Church, **CV34 6DZ**. Open Mondays 12.30pm-2.30pm.

Southorn Court, **CV32 7PU**. Open Tuesdays 11am-1pm.

St Mary's Church & Community centre, **CV31 1JW**. Open Wednesdays 1pm-3pm.

St Paul's Church, **CV32 4TE**. Open Thursdays 2pm-4pm.

Westbury Centre, **CV31 3JE**. Open Fridays 11am-1pm.

Saltisford Church, **CV34 4JX**. Open Fridays 1pm-3pm.

Food assistance

Breastfeeding support

Free one to one support with an NCT breastfeeding counsellor at **Lillington C&FC** every Tuesday.

To book an appointment call/text Lisa on **07906 959632**

Too good to go

Too Good To Go is a **free mobile app** that connects users with local restaurants, bakeries, supermarkets, and cafés offering unsold **surplus food at significantly reduced prices.**

By purchasing these "Surprise Bags," users help combat food waste while enjoying affordable meals.

Warwickshire local welfare scheme

Offers emergency food and financial assistance to families in crisis. Contact them at **0800 408 1448** or **01926 359182**. Further details can be found on the [Warwickshire County Council website](#).

For a comprehensive list of food support services in Warwickshire, visit <https://www.costoflivingwarwickshire.co.uk/food-support/food-support-1>

Holiday activities and food (HAF)

Provides **free meals and activities during school holidays** for children aged **4 to 16** who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals.

More information is available on the [Warwickshire County Council website](#).

Helping hands soup kitchen

Helping Hands Leamington offers free meals to vulnerable people:

- Breakfast: Weekdays (**Mon–Fri**), **10:30–11:30am** at **Althorpe Street Centre**
- Evening Meal: **Monday to Thursday, 6:30–7:30pm**

These services provide not just food, but community connection, supported by volunteers and donations.

Lillington community pantry

Offers a selection of **fresh, chilled, and store-cupboard foods** for a **£5 membership fee per visit**. Referrals can be made by individuals or through professionals like doctors or social workers. More details are available at thecommunitypantry.org.uk.

Education

Free School Transport (Warwickshire County Council)

- For Warwickshire residents **under 16** attending the nearest qualifying school.
 - Walking distance:
 - >2 miles (under 8),**
 - >3 miles (8+),**
 - or no safe walking route.
- Eligible for children with special educational needs, disabilities, or mobility issues meeting the criteria.
- More info: **School Transport – Warwickshire County Council.**

30 hours free childcare

- Who can get it? Working parents of 3–4-year-olds.
- Help: 30 free hours per week during term time (38 weeks/year)

15 hours free childcare

Children from age 9 months may be able to access a funded childcare place. Up to 15 hours a week, 38 weeks a year.

Tax-free childcare

Who can get it?

Working parents earning at least **£167/week** each (under £100k/year each).

Help: For every **£8** you pay in, the government adds **£2** (up to **£2,000**/year per child, or **£4,000** for disabled children).

School uniform

George at Asda is donating **£125,000** in gift cards via Buttle UK's Chances for Children grants to support low-income families with school essentials, including uniforms. Apply through **Chances for Children.**

Turn2us and **Family Information Services** can explore additional uniform grants.

Contact schools for in-house support, second-hand clothing, or end-of-year uniform sales.

Housing, bills and tax support

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)

Who can apply? People receiving Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit.

What it covers: Temporary top-ups to help with rent shortfalls or housing-related costs like moving expenses or rent deposits.

Council Tax Reduction

Who can apply? Low-income individuals or families, including those on Universal Credit.

What it offers: A reduction or exemption on your Council Tax bill, based on income and circumstances.

Household Support Fund

Who can apply? Low-income households.

What it covers: Food, energy (gas and electric), and water bills. Apply through your local council.

Support in the Warwick District

Local support includes help with:

- Water, Gas, and Electric Bills
- Council Tax Discounts & Exemptions
- Housing Support Services

Visit the Warwick District Council website or local children and family centres for assistance and referrals.

Barnardo's can support families in need by helping them apply for grants to cover essential household items. Availability of grants depends on current funding at the time of application.

Warm and Safer Homes Grant

Who can apply? Low-income or vulnerable households.

What it helps with: Heating repairs, insulation, and making homes safer and warmer. Typically available through local authorities or energy providers.

Universal Credit

Helps with: General living costs, including rent, food, and childcare. Additional elements for children and housing.

Government and Local authority support

Benefits and Income Support

Universal Credit

For low-income families (whether working or not)

Includes:

- Child Element
- Childcare Cost Element (up to 85% of expenses)
- Replaces older benefits like Child Tax Credit and Housing Benefit.
- Widowed Parent's Allowance
- For widowed parents with dependent children. Now replaced by Bereavement Support Payment (for deaths after 6 April 2017).

Financial Support for Raising Children

Child Benefit

- For all parents (subject to income limits). Amount (2025/26): £25.60/week for the first child
- £16.95/week for each additional child
- Reduced if one parent earns over £60,000/year.

Child Maintenance

- Payments from a non-resident parent to support their child.
- Can be arranged privately or through the Child Maintenance Service (CMS).

Parental Leave and Employment Rights

Maternity and Paternity Leave: Paid time off for new parents when a child is born or adopted.

Employers and statutory pay rules apply.

One-Off Payments and Grants

Sure Start Maternity Grant.

For first-time parents on qualifying benefits.

One-off, tax-free payment of £500 to help with baby costs.

Local Authority and Emergency Support

Local Welfare Assistance Schemes.

Short-term help for emergency needs such as food, energy bills, or essential furniture.

Varies by local council — not all areas offer this.

Children and/or family members with additional needs or disabilities

Carer's allowance

If you spend at least 35 hours a week caring for a disabled person who is on certain disability benefits and you do not work or work but earn less than the earnings limit.

Disability living allowance (DLA) for children under 16:

Support for families with disabled children.
Disabled facilities grants: help with adaptations to homes for disabled children.

New-style employment and support allowance (ESA):

If you have worked and paid sufficient national insurance contributions in the last 2-3 years and you are unable to work due to ill health or disability.

Personal Independence payment (PIP):

A benefit for people aged 16-64 with a disability, providing financial assistance with extra costs.

Young parents

Children and Family centre support

Children and Family Centres: Free playgroups, parenting classes, after school clubs, and support groups.

Lillington Children and Family Centre (Warwickshire):

Mondays 11am–1pm: Support for parents aged 21 and under

Services include:

- 1:1 mentoring
- Careers and college advice
- Housing and benefit help
- Child development guidance
- A chance to meet other young parents

Housing Support

- Shelter: Offers housing advice, emergency support, and legal guidance.
- Local Council Housing Support: Young parents may be prioritised for housing.
- Universal Credit (Housing Element): May help cover rent costs.

Other support

- Baby Box Project: Provides essential baby items and information for new parents.
- Family Nurse Partnership (under 20s): Home visits and health advice from trained nurses.
- Free NHS Dental & Prescriptions: During pregnancy and for one year after birth.

Education and Employment support

- Care to Learn: Financial help with childcare for under-20s in education.
- Parents' Learning Allowance: For students with dependent children.
- Careers and College Advice: Available through children's centres and local services.

Financial support

- Child Benefit: **£24/week** for the first child and **£15.90** for additional children.
- Universal Credit: Includes a child element and childcare costs (note the two-child limit).
- Sure Start Maternity Grant: A one-off **£500** payment for a first baby (if on certain benefits).
- Best Start Grant (Scotland): Financial support for pregnancy and early years.
- Parents' Learning Allowance: Helps full-time higher education students with childcare and study costs.
- Childcare Grant: Covers up to 85% of childcare costs for students in higher education.
- Healthy Start Vouchers: Free vitamins, milk, fruit, and vegetables for low-income pregnant women or parents with young children.

Clothing

Baby basics

Baby Basics UK is a national charity that provides essential items—such as clothes, nappies, and baby equipment—to families in need, including those facing poverty, seeking asylum, or fleeing domestic abuse.

Support is accessed through referrals from health and social care professionals (e.g. midwives, health visitors, social workers). Families cannot self-refer but can ask a professional they're working with to make a referral on their behalf.

Charity shops

Charity shops are retail stores run by or on behalf of charitable organizations. They sell donated second-hand items—such as clothing, books, toys, household goods, and more—to raise money for their charity's cause. Items are sold at low prices, making them accessible to people on a budget.

Barnardos

Barnardo's supports families through their children's centres and charity shops.

Their shops offer affordable pre-loved clothes, toys, and more, with proceeds funding their services.

Children's clothing is available from as little as 50p in centres and stores.

Families facing financial hardship can access free nappies and clothing through professional referral.

Clothing Coventry

Clothing Coventry is a local charity that provides free, season-appropriate clothing and shoes to people in need across Coventry.

How to Access Support:

- Request help via their online form at **clothingcoventry.org**.
- Once submitted, you'll receive a text inviting you to their Hillfields location to collect items.
- Support is available **once every 6 months** and is collection-only—no delivery.

Contact:

📍 **19 Napier Street, Hillfields, CV1 5PR**

Free support services

Parenting project

Free counselling sessions at Westgate, Kingsway & Lillington C & FC for children, young people and their families.

ROSA

ROSA is a frontline counselling service that supports women and girls affected by male violence.

Free counselling sessions are available at Kingsway Children and Family Centre.

☎ Contact: 01788 551150

✉ Online enquiry:
rosasupport.org/contact/make-a-general-enquiry

Family learning courses

Family learning offers **free courses and workshops** for parents and carers to develop their understanding of how their children learn through meaningful, practical activities.

Home-Start's Bumpstart postnatal group

Free support group on Monday afternoons at Lillington C&FC.

Contact Sarah:
07516 680649

www.homestartsouthwarwickshire.org.uk

Save a baby's life and save a child's life

Free Baby & Child First Aid

- Onlinebabycpr.com: Free baby CPR course (CPR, choking, emergencies). No fees; needs account. Suggests local practical training.
 - Firstaidforfree.com: Free first aid, CPR, AED courses (basic, pediatric, etc.). Free certificate; needs account.
 - RLSS UK Workshops: Free sessions for parents/carers on CPR, choking, emergency care.
- Book via RLSS UK or local branch.
Online at onlinebabycpr.com,
firstaidforfree.com.

Mind

Coventry and Warwickshire Mind offers free mental health support:

- 24/7 Helpline: 0800 616171 for emotional support.
- One-to-One Support: In-person, phone, or video.
- Drop-In Wellbeing Hubs: Safe spaces for advice.
- Safe Haven: Evening crisis support (6pm–11pm).
- Ages 7–25: Counselling and peer support.
- Recovery & Wellbeing Academy: Free workshops.
- NHS Talking Therapies: Self-refer for anxiety/depression.
- Online Support: Via Side by Side and Togetherall. More info: wellbeingforwarwickshire.org.uk or cwmind.org.uk.

Early help & targeted support team

Support is available **face-to-face** at the **Children and Family Centre (C&FC)** by **appointment**.

You can also access help via the **Family Support Line**, available **Monday to Friday, 9am–4pm**, on **01926 412412**.

Refuge

If you are experiencing domestic abuse in Warwickshire, Refuge's Domestic Violence and Abuse Service can support you and your children to stay safe.

Contact:

☎ Helpline: **0800 408 1552**
(Monday–Friday, 8:30am–8:30pm)

✉ Email: DVS@refuge.org.uk

to learn more about the support available or speak with a support worker in confidence.

Parenting courses

Courses are free, easily accessible and are advertised and bookable through Eventbrite.

Search www.eventbrite, **Warwickshire children and families** or email ehparenttrainers@warwickshire.gov.uk

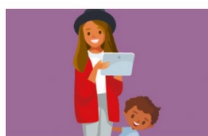
Warwickshire Family Information Service (FIS)

Warwickshire Family Information Service (FIS) supports thousands of families each year by helping them find the right information and services to meet their needs. They offer guidance across a wide range of support categories. If FIS is unable to provide a direct answer, they will connect you with a more suitable service that can help.

Contact details:

 **Phone: 0800 408 1556**

 **Email: fis@warwickshire.gov.uk**



Parenting support

In person and online guides, workshops and programmes for parents and carers.

[Learn more](#)



Expectant and new parents

Pregnancy and new baby support, help if you're feeling low or anxious and specialist support.

[Learn more](#)



Early years (0-5)

Feeding, sleeping, healthy habits, speech, language, communication and getting ready for school.

[Learn more](#)



Childcare

Help with childcare costs, choosing childcare, finding childcare and childcare for children with SEND.

[Learn more](#)



Children and family centres

Children and family centre locations and contact information, family support helpline and consultations.

[Learn more](#)



Family relationships

Family and parenting relationships, looking after your relationships, Family Network Meetings, separation and co-parenting.

[Learn more](#)



Housing, money and debt

Energy, food, housing, money and benefits.

[Learn more](#)



Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Go to the SEND Local Offer to view information and support for families with children and young people (0 to 25) who have SEND.

[Learn more](#)



Services for children and young people

Learning, working, health, care, Family Network Meetings, rights and advocacy.

[Learn more](#)



Children's social care

Child abuse concerns, safeguarding, social care support for those with SEND, assessments and Special Guardianship Orders.

[Learn more](#)



Health and wellbeing

Healthy lifestyle, drugs and alcohol, keeping warm, staying well, sexual health, relationships and vaccinations.

[Learn more](#)



Mental health and wellbeing

Mental health and wellbeing information and support for children, young people and adults.

[Learn more](#)



Keeping you and your children safe

Safety in and outside the home, bullying, cyber safety, domestic abuse, substance misuse and child exploitation.



Fostering

Go to the Fostering Warwickshire website.

[Learn more](#)



Adoption

Go to the Adoption Central England website.

[Learn more](#)



Early Support

Previously known as Early Help. Support for practitioners and points of contact.

[Learn more](#)

 <p>1</p> <p>DEFINITION OF A CHILD</p>	 <p>2</p> <p>NO DISCRIMINATION</p>	 <p>3</p> <p>BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD</p>	 <p>4</p> <p>MAKING RIGHTS REAL</p>	 <p>5</p> <p>FAMILY GUIDANCE AS CHILDREN DEVELOP</p>	 <p>6</p> <p>LIFE, SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT</p>	 <p>7</p> <p>NAME AND NATIONALITY</p>
 <p>8</p> <p>IDENTITY</p>	 <p>9</p> <p>KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER</p>	 <p>10</p> <p>CONTACT WITH PARENTS ACROSS COUNTRIES</p>	 <p>11</p> <p>PROTECTION FROM KIDNAPPING</p>	 <p>12</p> <p>RESPECT FOR CHILDREN'S VIEWS</p>	 <p>13</p> <p>SHARING THOUGHTS FREELY</p>	 <p>14</p> <p>FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND RELIGION</p>
 <p>15</p> <p>SETTING UP OR JOINING GROUPS</p>	 <p>16</p> <p>PROTECTION OF PRIVACY</p>	 <p>17</p> <p>ACCESS TO INFORMATION</p>	 <p>18</p> <p>RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS</p>	 <p>19</p> <p>PROTECTION FROM VIOLENCE</p>	 <p>20</p> <p>CHILDREN WITHOUT FAMILIES</p>	 <p>21</p> <p>CHILDREN WHO ARE ADOPTED</p>
 <p>22</p> <p>REFUGEE CHILDREN</p>	 <p>23</p> <p>CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES</p>	 <p>24</p> <p>HEALTH, WATER, FOOD, ENVIRONMENT</p>	 <p>25</p> <p>REVIEW OF A CHILD'S PLACEMENT</p>	 <p>26</p> <p>SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HELP</p>	 <p>27</p> <p>FOOD, CLOTHING, A SAFE HOME</p>	 <p>28</p> <p>ACCESS TO EDUCATION</p>
 <p>29</p> <p>AIMS OF EDUCATION</p>	 <p>30</p> <p>MINORITY CULTURE, LANGUAGE AND RELIGION</p>	 <p>31</p> <p>REST, PLAY, CULTURE, ARTS</p>	 <p>32</p> <p>PROTECTION FROM HARMFUL WORK</p>	 <p>33</p> <p>PROTECTION FROM HARMFUL DRUGS</p>	 <p>34</p> <p>PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL ABUSE</p>	 <p>35</p> <p>PREVENTION OF SALE AND TRAFFICKING</p>
 <p>36</p> <p>PROTECTION FROM EXPLOITATION</p>	 <p>37</p> <p>CHILDREN IN DETENTION</p>	 <p>38</p> <p>PROTECTION IN WAR</p>	 <p>39</p> <p>RECOVERY AND REINTEGRATION</p>	 <p>40</p> <p>CHILDREN WHO BREAK THE LAW</p>	 <p>41</p> <p>BEST LAW FOR CHILDREN APPLIES</p>	 <p>42</p> <p>EVERYONE MUST KNOW CHILDREN'S RIGHTS</p>

43-54



HOW THE CONVENTION WORKS

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD