



# Harriers Banbury Academy

an Aspirations Academy

Alex Pearson – Executive Principal

Harriers View, Bloxham Road,  
Banbury, OX16 9JW  
Telephone: 01295 263067  
Email: [office@harriers-aspirations.org](mailto:office@harriers-aspirations.org)  
Web: [harriers-aspirations.org](http://harriers-aspirations.org)

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Dear Parents and carers,

This has been a difficult time and we know that some of our families are really struggling this Christmas. We also know that our Harriers community is an amazing one, and there is support available if people are finding things difficult.

Please see the useful information on our website at:

<http://www.harriers-aspirations.org/parents-information/health-and-wellbeing/household-support/>

and in our newsletters at: <http://www.harriers-aspirations.org/news-dates/newsletters/>

Here is a summary of some of the crucial support available to you.

### **Vouchers for use over the break**

Since the pandemic began, the government have been funding vouchers to supplement holiday meals for children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM). Parents of eligible children will automatically receive a voucher per child, for use over the upcoming Christmas holiday. We are delighted to confirm that the level of funding has been increased to £25 per child per week. It is our understanding that support will also be provided over the February and Easter breaks. Vouchers will be with you before we break up for the holidays.

### **Food Bank**

The Banbury Food Bank is available via a number of local distribution centres. They can provide support parcels to last a number of days, for collection at specified times (visit <http://banbury.foodbank.org.uk>).

Harriers is authorised to issue vouchers for the Food Bank, so we encourage families who may be struggling to let us know – you can do so confidentially via the office, class teacher or via Mrs Stephens.

### **Household Support/Winter Fund**

Households who may struggle to afford life's essentials over winter are being encouraged to talk to Citizens Advice about a new voucher scheme, set up by Cherwell District Council using money from the government's Household Support Fund.

It will help pay for vulnerable households' food, energy, and water bills – other costs can be covered too, including clothing and replacements or repairs for white goods or essential transport costs. Anyone who believes they may need this support is invited to contact Citizens Advice North Oxfordshire and South Northants (CANOSN).

The scheme is not only open to those on benefits; funds are awarded based on a household's specific situation and needs.

People can call the CANOSN Household Support Fund helpline on **0300 303 0993** to leave their details in a voicemail and wait for a call back to be assessed.

**Salvation Army gifts**

The Salvation Army have been collecting presents for families in need. If you would like more information, please email [Malcolm.Anderson@salvationarmy.org.uk](mailto:Malcolm.Anderson@salvationarmy.org.uk) or phone 07884-191997. They will need to know ages, by boy/girl, with presents to be collected Tuesday 21st December 10.30am-12:00pm.

**Gift Bank**

We are keen to help, and happy to receive help, to ensure the children can receive something at this special time of year. If you feel able to donate food or toys (good, new condition please), we would be grateful. These may be donated via your class teacher or via the office, and we will then distribute them.

Please speak to us if you are struggling – you can do so confidentially via the office, class teacher or via Mrs Stephens.

Wishing you all joy at this special time of year, and thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Alex Pearson  
Executive Principal