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Dear Parents and Carers,

From Wandsworth Council, we would like to thank each and every one of you for your incredible resilience this year in adapting to a pandemic which has brought many different challenges for Wandsworth families.

Wandsworth Council has worked in partnership with our fantastic schools to help them to re-open and stay open this year through a special package of support. We are so proud that as a team we have achieved one of the best performances in the country in terms of school openings and attendance.

This Council is particularly committed to supporting those children that are most in need. This is true every year, but during this pandemic we wanted to find a way to provide **special targeted support to the most vulnerable in our communities**.

When it comes to **food**, we are therefore committing **special targeted funds to provide:**

- Free food vouchers for the Christmas holiday and next half term to one of the largest selections of children in the country, using our own Wandsworth app (one of the first in the country to launch back in March). Our scheme is targeted at those in particular need; all children entitled to Free School Meals, all those with a social worker and in need of help or protection, all those extremely clinically vulnerable, all those with disabilities within our 0-25 service, all those registered as young carers and all foster families.
- Financial support for families and individuals in need, with food, energy and water bills.
- Grants to local voluntary groups and clubs to provide hot meals and food parcels to vulnerable children in the community.
- Funding for a set of fun and educational activity programmes for children during the winter holidays, in partnership with our brilliant local youth organisations, to help children catch up on learning.

This is one of the most extensive, if not the most extensive, schemes in the whole country.

When it comes to **digital**, Wandsworth has worked tirelessly this year to ensure that children continue to access learning when working remotely. We have provided over **1800 laptops** plus data vouchers and dongles through our **Power to Connect** partnership with Battersea Power Station and other local schemes.

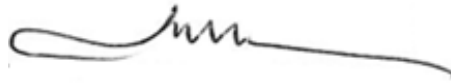
We are so proud that we will shortly become one of, if not the only, local authorities in the country to provide free laptops to EVERY child in Wandsworth identified as in digital need. We are doing this by providing up to 600 additional laptops and data vouchers for children.

We wish all families in Wandsworth a joyous Christmas break, and hope that this package of support will bring some much needed cheer to the festive period and ensure that many more children and families have a very Happy Christmas.

Best wishes,



Cllr Will Sweet
Cabinet Member for Children's Services



Ana Popovici
Director of Children's Services

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Schools have been helping us identify children who require digital support. If your child does not have access to technology to aid their learning, please do ensure that you contact Pedro Peixoto Pedro.Peixoto@RichmondandWandsworth.gov.uk

Schools will also help all families who require any support in accessing our food e-vouchers - they are happy to print them off on your behalf. If you have any questions linked to free school meals, please contact Pedro Peixoto Pedro.Peixoto@RichmondandWandsworth.gov.uk

If you haven't heard from us and think that you may be entitled to support over the Christmas break, please don't hesitate to contact us on 020 8871 6622.