**Get help with school uniform costs**

Parents across Blackpool could be eligible for up to £100 off their child’s school uniforms for the upcoming year.

Blackpool Council is offering the grant to help families who have suffered some financial impact to their household income as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Qualifying families can apply for a one-off grant of £30 for a child at primary school and £100 for a child at secondary school.

The COVID-19 related grant must be used to only purchase items included on the list of approved uniform items as specified by individual schools.

In order to apply for a school uniform grant, applicants must be a Blackpool resident and live within the Blackpool Council boundaries. They also must have responsibility for dependent primary or secondary school age children within their household

Applicants must be able to demonstrate that their household income has been adversely affected by the current coronavirus pandemic, for example, furlough, unemployment or reduced income.

Once an application has been made, parents can expect to receive a response within five working days. Payments will be made via a barcode to the applicant’s mobile phone number.

Applications will close when the one-off funding runs out.

If an application is successful, receipts for uniform item purchased to the value of the grant must be retained for a period of at least three months. These may be required for grant verification and audit purposes.

Only one application can be submitted per household for a maximum of six children. For parents applying for more than six children, another application form will need to be completed.

Duplicate applications for the same household or children will not be considered.

The school uniform grant forms part of the council’s support to help all pupils return to school next month.

Working closely with schools, and parents and carers, as well as the Department for Education, the council is making sure that all local schools reopen in the safest way possible.

Most of the schools in Blackpool have remained open throughout the pandemic to support critical workers and vulnerable children and this has been managed safely.

It is vital that children and young people return to school for their educational progress, wellbeing and wider development. The opening of schools also means those looking after children can get back to some kind of normal.

**Cllr Kath Benson, Blackpool Council Cabinet Member for Schools, Education and Aspiration,** said: “We understand that the effects of Covid-19 have created additional pressures for families which is why we have launched this scheme to provide some financial relief.

“We are committed to supporting families in Blackpool as much as we can, and this grant will help to ease the pressure on families in need.

 “There may be individuals or families in Blackpool who have never needed additional support but maybe due to redundancy, now need a helping hand.

“A small dedicated team of people are ready to process the applications and all requests will be cross checked against information held within the council.

“We are looking forward to seeing all our pupils return to school next month. Schools are busy preparing to make changes to ensure that they are safe and secure.

“We will continue to do everything we can to support our communities through this unsettling time.”

To apply for the school uniform grant, visit [www.blackpool.gov.uk/uniformgrants](http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/uniformgrants)

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editor:**

Blackpool Council has launched a Back to School Safely campaign to ensure that all pupils return to school at the start of the new term. To find out more, visit [www.blackpool.gov.uk/BackToSchoolSafely](http://www.blackpool.gov.uk/BackToSchoolSafely)