

# Railway Benefit Fund pledge to lend a helping hand to railway families with children

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Much-loved rail charity the **Railway Benefit Fund** (RBF) has relaunched its Family Support Fund, which is designed to offer extra support for families with a household income of under £40,000.

Now known as the Children's Fund, this fund offers grants of up to £300 to cover the cost of the common and hidden expenses that families often incur when bringing up children. This relaunch has been possible thanks to the generous support that the RBF received during Railway Family Week, which saw over £50,000 raised for the charity allowing us to expand our offering of support to many more.

The Children's Fund offers financial assistance to support children in a variety of ways. The grant can be used to purchase anything from school uniform, sports kit and equipment, days out or school trip expenses. It can also be used to pay for tuition and summer school fees, as well as baby costs for new parents.

## **Home Schooling Fund**

The Children's Fund is another RBF initiative set up to help with the urgent need many families in rail have

had during this pandemic. The first initiative – the Home Schooling Fund – was set up in reaction to the news in January 2021 that most children in the UK would be home schooled until further notice.

The Home-Schooling fund was created as an emergency measure as the RBF saw that many families did not have the equipment to effectively home school, with classes and home work being conducted on parent's mobile phones or having to share tablets, laptops, or phones between children. This meant that some classes were missed, and home work could not be completed.

From early January until February half term, the RBF awarded direct financial support to over 100 families, giving out over 170 pieces of home-schooling equipment to 217 children including laptops, tablets and printers.

### **RBF Children's Fund Extra support for children**

As restrictions begin to ease in the UK, parents are facing even more financial pressure. Although children no longer need equipment for home schooling, we are now seeing the reopening of after school clubs, the restarting of swimming, music and dance lessons, as well as the cost of school trips again. For some families, these costs can become overwhelming.

The RBF have adjusted the criteria to apply for the Children's Fund to make it even more inclusive. Railway workers past and present can apply to the Children's Fund if their household income is less than £40,000 and they are in receipt of Child Benefit. The maximum grant that can be awarded from the Children's Fund is £300.

Ryan Morgan, Welfare Officer at RBF, said: "After the incredible demand we saw for home schooling equipment earlier this year, we knew that we needed to make our Family Support Fund available to even more families. Therefore, we have increased the limit on household income as well as the maximum grant awarded so that we can support as many railway families as possible."

Apply for the RBF Children's Fund here: [www.railwaybenefitfund.org.uk/how-we-can-help/childrens-fund/](http://www.railwaybenefitfund.org.uk/how-we-can-help/childrens-fund/)

Learn more about the RBF and how they can help you here: [www.railwaybenefitfund.org.uk/](http://www.railwaybenefitfund.org.uk/)

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