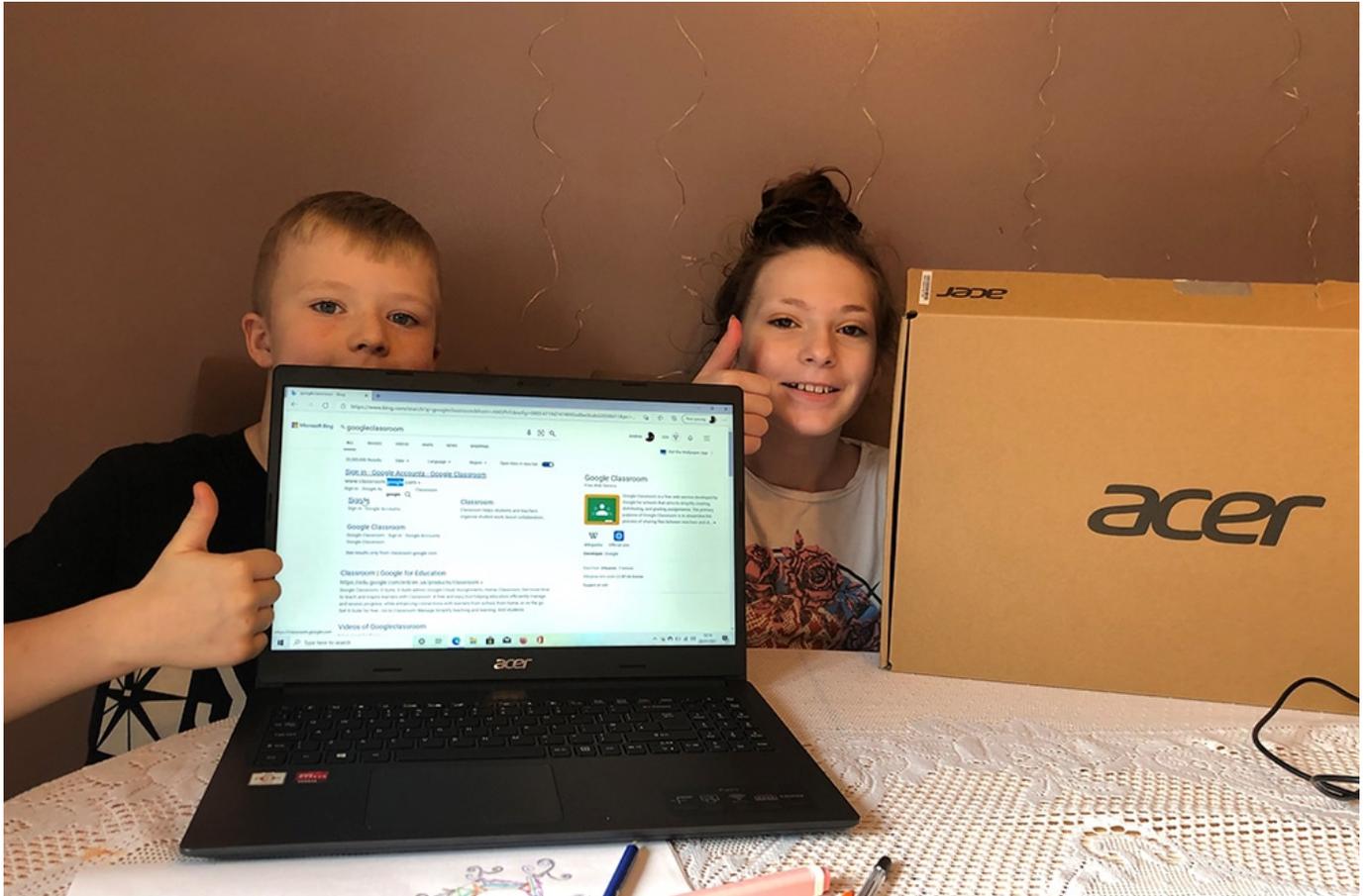


Railway Benefit Fund support hundreds of children with the Home Schooling Fund

March 9, 2021



As schools go back this week, **Railway Benefit Fund** (RBF) has received thanks and praise from families across the industry for the invaluable help received during home schooling and lockdown.

RBF has awarded direct financial support to over 100 families in the first school term of 2021. The Home Schooling Fund ran from early January until February half term and was designed to be responsive to the needs of the industry, after the government announced the closure of schools. In total, the RBF has awarded over 170 pieces of home schooling equipment to 217 children including laptops, tablets and printers.

The 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. Support was available from schools and the government, but those identified as most in need were prioritised. This left a gap in sufficient support for home schooling for those in employment with limited means to purchase the required devices for their children.

The fund was promoted widely across the industry, with applications received from rail workers across the UK including people at GWR, Unipart Rail, Network Rail, Avanti West Coast, TfL, Northern, Southeastern, Crosscountry and Scotrail to name but a few.

John from SPL Powerlines reached out to the RBF after learning about the Home Schooling Fund. In May 2020 he lost his father to the coronavirus, which deeply affected his family, especially his children. On top of this, they were struggling to keep up with home schooling as they were having to share equipment between the five of them. John reached out to the RBF and they awarded him the essential home schooling equipment for his children.

John said: “Me and my family would like to say a huge thank you to the RBF. The funding that RBF has provided will be a massive help and will take away the pressure, which we all need right now. With my dad having been part of the Railway Family for nearly 20 years, and myself for nearly 14 years, it never ceases to amaze me how much everyone helps each other out when we need it most.”

Another recipient of the fund, who wishes to remain anonymous, said: “Getting a laptop meant my sons could join their classes and their friends which was a huge weight off my mind. It was more than the money though, it meant someone cared enough to help. I can’t thank you enough.”

Pete Waterman, President of RBF said: “We are delighted to have been able to react so quickly to an important national issue and to provide grants for those without access to home schooling equipment. The RBF are proud to have been there for the Railway Family in a time of national crisis.”

If you want to support the work that RBF does, you can fundraise or donate to Railway Family Week, a brand new fundraising event bringing together the entire rail industry.

Learn more about the event here: www.railwaybenefitfund.org.uk/railway-family-week/

Set up your JustGiving page here: www.justgiving.com/campaign/RailwayFamilyWeek