



College hardship fund

1 **Policy statement**

King Edward VI College recognises that there can be occasions where students face barriers in applying for the 16-19 Bursary. The College does not believe that finance should ever be a barrier to accessing education. The College hardship fund has been established to support students with safeguarding concerns who are unable to apply for the 16-19 Bursary Fund to obtain the resources they require to ensure equity amongst their peers.

2 **Policy aims**

King Edward VI College has a workable and fair system of allocation for the distribution of funds, targeted at those most in need.

Any expenditure through this fund must:

- Be for its intended purpose.
- Be value for money.
- Not be subject to any conflict of interest.
- Be approved at the appropriate local delegation level as per the MAT financial regulations.

The purpose of the fund is to provide money for essential purchases to ensure all students have equal opportunities.

3 **Application of the policy**

A student would be eligible to access the College Hardship Fund if:

- They have a safeguarding flag on the Portal.
- They are not already in receipt of the 16-19 Bursary Fund and free college meals.

Examples of students who would be eligible to access this fund includes, but is not limited to:

- A student who the College knows would be eligible for bursary based on their personal circumstances but faces barriers in applying. This could be because parents are unwilling to cooperate or are physically unable to provide evidence.
- A student who has left the family home and requires support for an interim period until they get all of the documents needed to apply for the Vulnerable 16-19 Bursary Fund.

Where the financial circumstances of a parent change suddenly, that family should apply to access the 16-19 Bursary Fund as opposed to this Fund.

The fund is intended to support students with ~~any~~ costs incurred to attend and achieve success at College. This includes:

- Travel to college, whether that is via public or college transport
- Access to free meals in the morning and at lunchtime
- Funding for essential trips as part of a student's course
- Any materials required to complete individual courses
- Basic stationery
- Costs associated with exploring future destinations such as travel expenses to university open days or exam entry fees
- Essential living expenses such as food, clothes, and toiletries. This does not include paying for accommodation or any associated accommodation expenses.

4 Policy guidelines

For a student to access the fund, a referral must be made from the Assistant Principal (Student Support) or the Safeguarding Officer with the support from the Assistant Principal (Student Support) to the Business and Finance Manager. The referee must:

- Outline the circumstances which the student is facing with supporting evidence. Supporting evidence includes but is not limited to; a child protection plan, translations of meetings with social services, CPOMS records.
- Outline the financial support the student requires.

This should be done via email to maintain an audit trail. Presuming the value is within the delegation authority set out by the Heart of Mercia Financial Regulations, it can be approved by the Business and Finance Manager.

Funds can either be transferred to the student's bank account or the College can purchase items on their behalf. If funds are transferred to the student's bank account, receipts must be provided to the College finance department as soon as possible to prove the payment has been used for its intended purpose. Failure to provide receipts could result in access to the fund being limited in the future.

5 Equality Impact

The College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy has been considered and embraced in relation to this policy.

Date of review	Date agreed	JCC	Governors	Review date	Comments
June 2025	June 2025	N/A	N/A	June 2027	