



## F&P16: Student Financial Support – Hardship Fund Policy

### Introduction

The Commonweal School's hardship fund is there to support students whose family circumstances mean they would not be able to participate in educational trips and other school events.

The school's Charging and Remissions Policy, found on the school's website, details what the school can charge for and what can be requested as a voluntary contribution.

If you are eligible then the school would urge you to apply for Free School Meals, more details of this and eligibility criteria can be found on the school website or on the School Gateway.

You do not need to be in receipt of Free School Meals to qualify for the hardship fund.

### Aim of Fund

The Hardship Fund is a discretionary source of financial help available to all registered full time Academy students. The aim of the Fund is to help students who have difficulties in paying for:

- Curriculum trips, visits and residentials (up to 50% of the cost)
- Uniform, shoes or sports kit
- Other materials or equipment required for their academic studies
- Expenses to attend seminars, interviews or work experience placements
- Emergency travel expenses

**Payments from the Fund are discretionary and if awarded do not need to be repaid.**

The Academy will consider requests for hardship funding from the following groups of students:

- students living alone outside the family home
- students in receipt of free school meals
- students in families with very low incomes
- students with disabilities
- students who are or have been in care

Your Children may be eligible for grants from our hardship fund if:

- The household income is below £20,000
- A student whose parents are currently claiming other means-tested benefits such as Universal Credit, 'new style' Jobseekers Allowance or 'new style' Employment and Support Allowance

- At the discretion of the Headteacher, any student who does not fall under the categories listed above but consider themselves to be in financial hardship.

You may NOT be eligible for hardship grants if you receive Working Tax Credit.

Proof of Benefit is required. Proof must be in letter form and:

- Proof of benefit must have been issued within the last six months
- Proof must show the family address given
- Proof must be included with the grant application
- Bank Statements, incapacity, housing and council tax benefit are not valid proof.

Letters of Proof of Benefits can be obtained from:

- Inland Revenue Child Benefit Office 0300 200 3100
- Inland Revenue Tax Credits 0345 300 3900
- Jobcentre Plus Swindon 0800 169 0190

### How to apply to the Hardship Fund

An application should be made through the student's Head of House. The application will remain confidential and will be considered by the Head of House given their knowledge of the student's circumstances.

If approved by the Head of House the application will be passed to the Headteacher or his delegated officer for final approval of the payment.

The payment will be made only in the following ways

- For emergency travel expenses the payment will be in cash (maximum £30)
- For all other expenses the payment will be made through the Academy's internal financial system or by receipt of invoice for goods purchased

A student may be able to apply for hardship support at any time during the academic year. It may also be possible to apply more than once, but usually only where circumstances have not changed.

Students cannot appeal a decision not to award a hardship grant as the Headteacher's decision is final.

### Monitoring and Review

This policy will be updated in the light of any new legislation and reviewed by the Governing Body every other year, in the first instance, or sooner if required.

The Commonweal School – Hardship Fund Application

Please complete and return this form with the necessary supporting documentation to the students' HEAD OF HOUSE:

*Please complete in capital letters*

**Your details**

Title:	Miss, Ms, Mrs, Mr or Other
Surname or Family Name:	
First Name:	
Partner's Surname (if applicable):	
Partner's First Name (if applicable):	
Address:	
Postcode:	
Telephone:	
Email address:	

**Student you wish to claim for**

Name of Student	Tutor	Date of Birth	Gender (M or F)

## Clothing

Items of clothing needed. Please provide sizes for items. If you need the same item of clothing for more than one child, please complete another copy of this page.

Item	Tick if needed	Number needed	Size
Tie			
White Shirt			Collar:
Blue Shirt			Collar:
Black Skirt			Waist:
Black Trousers			Waist:            Leg:
Blue jumper			Chest:
Black jumper			Chest:
Polo Shirt (Summer Term only)			Chest:
PE t-shirt			Chest:
PE rugby shirt			Chest:
PE shorts			Waist:
PE skirt			Waist:
Football socks			

## Declaration

I certify that the information provided here is true. I understand that a false declaration will result in the refusal of this application.

Parent or Guardian's signature:

Date:

Office use only	
Date Received:	
Received by:	
Approved?	YES / NO (delete as necessary)
Approval Date:	
Approved by (name):	
Approved by (Position):	
Signed:	
Office Stamp:	

**PROTECTION OF PUBLIC FUNDS**

We must protect the public funds we handle and so we may use the information you have provided on this form to prevent and detect fraud. We may also share this information, for the same purposes, with other organisations that handle public funds, and with this in mind, a sample of applications will be chosen at random for full investigation.

**DATA PROTECTION**

The data controller is The Commonweal School. The data you provide to us will be used to assess and facilitate your entitlement to help from the Hardship Fund at The Commonweal School. In fulfilling its data protection obligations will treat all personal data, held manually and on a computerised database with due care, and will only disclose data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998/GDPR May 2018.

## School Trip

- For trips over £40 the maximum funding towards the trip will not normally exceed £150 or more than 25% of the trip cost.
- Only one such award per student per year will normally be considered.
- For core curriculum trips funding will be at the Headteacher's discretion.

Name of school trip	
Dates of trip	
Total cost of trip	
Amount paid to date	
Amount outstanding	
Amount of support requested	
Reason why you are seeking support	

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Date:

Your application will be processed in due course.

Office use only	
Date Received:	
Received by:	
Approved?	YES / NO (delete as necessary)
Approval Date:	
Approved by (name):	
Approved by (Position):	
Signed:	
Office Stamp:	

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## Books/other equipment

Funding will be at the Headteacher's discretion.

Details of books/other equipment including cost per item	
Number requested	
Total cost	
Amount paid to date	
Amount outstanding	
Amount of support requested	
Reason why you are seeking support	

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Parent or Guardian's signature:

Date:

Your application will be processed in due course.



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Received by:	
Approved?	YES / NO (delete as necessary)
Approval Date:	
Approved by (name):	
Approved by (Position):	
Signed:	
Office Stamp:	

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