

# LONGLEY PARK SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

## DISCRETINARY SUPPORT FUNDS

### Introduction

Discretionary Support Funds (DSF) are provided by the Government via the Learning and Skills Council to provide financial support to certain students who are in genuine financial hardship during their time at college. The College allocates these funds in accordance with the guidance set out by the Learning and Skills Council.

- Students from low-income families or from families receiving means-tested benefits can apply for money from the DSF. All applications are considered on an individual basis. If the application is approved, students are notified by email and Student Services make arrangements for the student to receive the support agreed. This may be in the form of cash, cheque, voucher, equipment e.g. art materials or books.
- Students over the age of 19 who travel to college by public transport and are unable to receive financial assistance from their Local Authority can apply for help from the DSF. If approved the college will issue a voucher, for the full cost or in part, for a bus pass to the student for one term at a time.
- Unforeseen and emergency support will be given to students at the discretion of the Student Services Manager or College Management Team. In such circumstances, it is possible to issue a cash payment to the student.
- If there are continuing needs, a student may make further applications for support from the DSF.

### What will the fund help with?

The fund may help with a range of student needs, including:

- Travel to and from college and other travel that supports course/college activity e.g. to and from placement, enrichment, HE visits.
- Books.
- Equipment particular to and necessary for successful completion of the course.
- Childcare costs for those not eligible for 'Care to Learn' scheme.
- Personal support needs that may prevent access to education.

### How do students apply?

By completing an application form available at Student Services.

Once complete the form is handed into Student Services who meet weekly to consider the application and to make a decision as to whether the student qualifies and if so how much should be allocated. In preparation for this decision process Student Services will verify where appropriate the cost of items requested with the relevant subject area. Costs associated with courses are held by the Student Services Manager.

The student receives a decision by email following the meeting. For students facing emergency situations this can be processed quicker, but the College also has an hardship fund that can be accessed in such circumstances.

Where successful the agreed allocation is issued.

Where unsuccessful, reasons are given in person. An appeal can be made in the first instance to Student Services. Longley Park Sixth Form College Appeals procedure will be implemented if a further appeal is made.