



THE DOWNS SCHOOL

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Headteacher: C R Prosser BSc
Deputy Head: C A Butler BSc MPhil
Deputy Head: J A Preston BA

Dear Parents, Carers and Sixth Form Students,

Financial Support for Sixth Form Students

The school has a Bursary fund to support students from low income families to support their Sixth Form education. This can be used to cover the costs of transport, meals, books, field trips, revision guides and equipment. For the 2018/19 academic year this fund will be around £12,000.

- *We encourage any student who needs financial assistance for their sixth form education to apply for this funding.*
- *For students who will be in year 12 at September 2018, application forms will be included in the Offer Pack for successful sixth form candidates in March 2018 and should be returned with the offer acceptance form to the Sixth Form Office*
- *For students who will be in year 13 at September 2018, application forms should be returned to the Sixth Form Office*
- *We MUST receive an application form (even if the school already know that you are eligible, or you have already received a Bursary in year 12) because we must know your travel costs.*

Administration & Payment Process

If a bursary is to pay partly or fully for bus travel then the money may be paid directly to the transport service provider. Other bursaries will be paid in instalments at September and January.

Dispute Resolution and Attendance Expectations

Eligibility to receive a bursary will be determined jointly by the Head of Sixth Form and myself. Appeals may be heard by a panel comprising the Headteacher and a Governor, whose decision is final. To remain eligible for the Bursary students must have a 95% attendance record.

Who is eligible to apply for this Bursary Fund

Please see overleaf for details of who can apply for this funding.

How to apply

As most bursary grants will include an award for travel costs it will help us if applications are made in good time. A bursary application form will be sent out to all students with their offer packs in March 2018. **New sixth form students should return their bursary application, with their offer acceptance, even if travel arrangements have not been finalised.**

Yours sincerely,

Lisa Hill

Mrs L Hill
Business Manager

Who is Eligible for the Bursary Fund?

- a) Students who are themselves either in care, care leavers, or in receipt of income support or Universal Credit, and disabled young people in receipt of Employment Support Allowance and who are also in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments. These students will receive a bursary of £1,200 a year.
- b) Students who are either on the school's Free School Meals register already, or who are eligible for Free School Meals but have not actually registered. The criterion for Free School Meals is that parents or guardians claim one of the following:
- Income Support
 - Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance (IBJSA)
 - Support under Part IV of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999
 - Child Tax Credit (except where Working Tax Credit also applies) and income less than £16,190
 - Guarantee element of State Pension Credit (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs)

The process for registering for free school meals has been simplified by the council. It is now much easier to apply and then stay on the list. Parents can apply on-line at www.westberks.gov.uk at the bottom of the page under the heading *All Services* click on **Schools, Learning and Libraries** then choose "*Apply for Free School Meals*". You just need your National Insurance number or NASS. Or you can just ring West Berkshire Council on 01635 503090 and they will take your application over the phone. It really is worth applying if you think you might be eligible, because your children will now get so much financial benefit in school, as well as free meals if they want them.

- c) Students who have been registered at any point in the last 6 years for Free School Meals (known as "Ever6FSM")
- d) Students from families whose income is less than the Free School Meals limit of £16,190 but who cannot register for free school meals because they get Working Tax Credit (this is a category of low income that we have defined here at The Downs School, the low income family test, LIFT)
- e) If funds allow, other low income students not in any of the categories above will be considered. Please explain your circumstances on the application form.