



Hardship Assistance Fund Policy

Applicable 17th October 2023

Signed: 

Chair of Governors

Date of Governor Approval 16th October 2023
Approved by Finance, Staffing & Premises Committee
Next review October 2026

Introduction

Plashet School often receives requests for financial support in respect of educational visits and school uniform. Although not obliged to do so, the school provides an amount of money each year to help families who may be in financial difficulty. The aim of this fund is to help the most vulnerable access the educational opportunities available.

The aim of this policy is to set out fair and objective criteria for assessing such applications.

Role of Governors

The Finance and Staffing Committee is responsible for this policy on behalf of the governing board.

Role of Head Teacher and Leadership Team

The Head Teacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, School Business Manager and leadership team line manager form the 'Consideration Panel' that assesses applications.

Conditions

The policy will be applied to all students equitably.

Requests for financial assistance are limited to:

- students only
- the student being on roll at the time of the request
- an identified academic or pastoral need
- funds being available.

The following conditions apply:

- all reasonable endeavours to obtain funding from other sources have been explored
- certain non-educational visits/activities may not be eligible.

All awards of financial support are only valid for the academic year of approval and do not constitute an ongoing commitment by Plashet School. Applications for subsequent academic years can be made.

Parents/carers should apply directly to Plashet School for funding using the application form in Appendix A. Applications will be individually assessed by the Consideration Panel. Before payments can be made, documentary evidence will be required to support each application.

All applications and any supporting documentation will be held securely and treated in the strictest confidence. Any financial information relating to this claim will only be accessible by the Consideration Panel.

What is the Hardship Assistance Fund?

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

1. Curriculum educational visits including residentials (usually up to 50% of the cost);
2. Uniform, shoes or PE kit;
3. Other materials or equipment to assist in academic studies;
4. Other necessary expenses.

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

Plasht School will consider requests for hardship assistance funding from the following groups of students:

- 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.

If you are experiencing hardship and do not fall into the categories above, please contact your child's Year Coordinator in the first instance to discuss your exceptional circumstances.

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

- Must have been issued in the last six months
- Must show the family address held by Plasht School
- Must be included with the application.

How to apply to the Hardship Assistance Fund

An application should be made through the Head Teacher. The application will remain confidential and will be considered by the Head Teacher and consideration panel given their knowledge of the student's circumstances. If approved the application will be passed to the Finance Office for processing.

A parent/carer or indeed student may be able to apply for financial 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 changed - approval of one application does not necessarily mean that further applications will be approved. Families cannot appeal a decision not to award a hardship grant as the panel's decision is final.

Financial Hardship Fund Application Form

PLEASE COMPLETE IN CAPITAL LETTERS

Part A: Personal details

Student name:	Form Group:
Parent/Carer name:	
Address:	
Home phone number:	
Mobile phone number:	
Email address:	
Activity/Item for which funding is requested:	
Cost of activity/item: £	
Amount of funding requested: £	

Part B: Support requested

Clothing Application

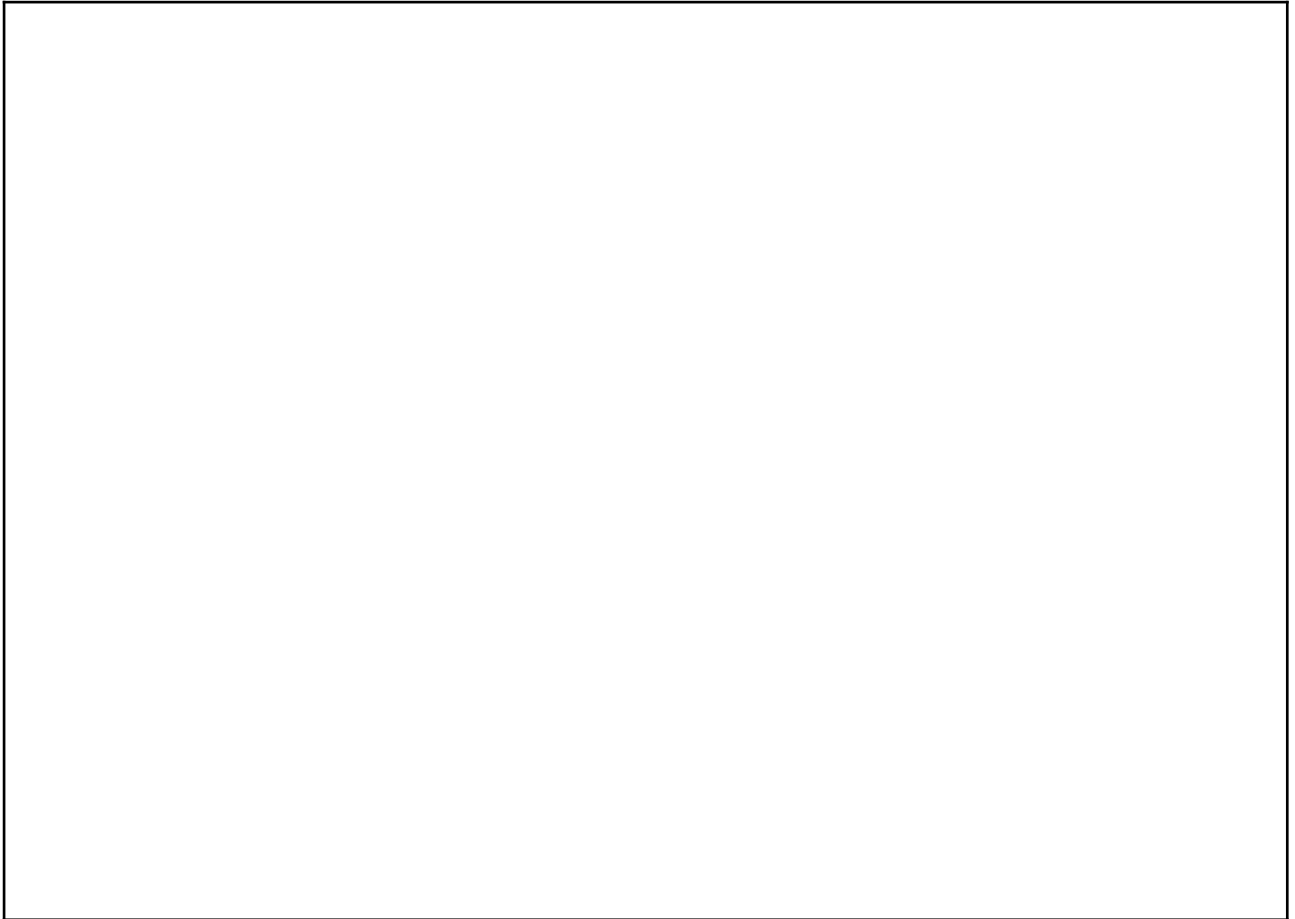
Item	Tick if needed	Size
School Uniform		
Plasnet jumper		
Plasnet cardigan		
Black shoes		
Navy trousers		
Navy skirt		
White blouse/shirt		
Navy head scarf		
Navy Shalwar Kameez		
Navy Jilbab		
Tights /socks		
PE Kit		
Light blue polo shirt		
Black jogger		
Black zip-up shell jacket		
Trainers		
white sports socks		

Educational Visit Support Application

Name of school visit:	
Date of visit:	
Total cost of visit:	
Amount paid to date:	
Amount outstanding:	
Amount of support requested:	

Part C:

Please provide as much relevant information as possible to support your application. Please provide copies of documents if necessary. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the applicant to provide supporting information and documents. The box occupies the majority of the page's vertical space below the instructions.

Part D: Declaration

Grounds for application

Your household income is an important factor when assessing whether you are eligible for any support from the hardship fund.

Ground for application	Tick if applies	Evidence enclosed
<i>In receipt of qualifying benefits:</i>		
Income support		
Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance		
Income-related Employment and Support Allowance		
Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999		
The guarantee element of State Pensions Credit		
Child Tax Credit (but not Working Tax Credit) with an annual income below £16,190		
Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after your employment finished or after you start to work less than 16 hours per week		
Universal credit		
<i>Other grounds:</i>		
Student in receipt of Free School Meals		
Student has disabilities		
Student in care or care leaver		
<i>Other, please specify:</i>		

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

Signature of Parent/Carer	Date

Please complete and return this form with the necessary supporting documentation to:
Plashet School Reception or via email to: info@plashet.newham.sch.uk

Plashtet School administrative use only	
Date received:	
Received by:	
Approved by consideration panel:	YES / NO (delete as necessary)
Approval date:	
Approved by consideration panel names & roles:	
Signed:	

Please pass it to the Finance Officer for processing