

LANGDON PARK **SIXTH FORM**



Financial Support Guide 2019-20

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Important notes

There are specific forms which must be completed for each of the following:

- 16-19 vulnerable groups bursary
- 16-19 discretionary student bursary*
- Access Universities and Apprenticeships fund*
- Hardship fund*

Forms can be obtained from the Head of Sixth or Assistant Headteacher KS5.

The vulnerable groups bursary is a set amount of £1200 and will be paid in cash at set times throughout the year to students in specific groups only.

The value of discretionary bursary will not be known in advance of the student's application – it depends on the number of applications received and is likely to vary according to individual need.

**For these funds, support will be provided in kind wherever possible, eg school will buy revision guides, organise booking of train tickets, order items of clothing or equipment online. In cases where a cash payment is issued, students will be required to submit a receipt and return any change to the finance team.*

Introduction and Tower Hamlets EMA Update

In previous years, many students in our sixth form received support from the *Tower Hamlets Education Maintenance Allowance*. This was a scheme that Tower Hamlets council put in place to give ongoing financial assistance to students from low-income families after the government stopped the national EMA scheme. Unfortunately this scheme will not be continuing in 2019/20, as the funding the council had allocated to this has now run out.

As a school, we are committed to supporting our students in every way we can, and we have always done everything we can to support those in need of financial assistance. We have undertaken a review of our support provision in the light of the news on Tower Hamlets EMA, inviting students to complete a survey to try to get a better picture of their needs. The 16-19 bursary will now be the main source of financial support (details on pages 5-6).

Important points to note:

- If students were eligible for TH EMA last year, that does not mean they will automatically now receive 16-19 bursary, as that fund is much smaller and we are required to prioritise those in greatest need.
- If students do make a successful application for 16-19 bursary, their allocation will not be at the same level as TH EMA had been, because that was a scheme had a much larger amount of money set aside.
- Whereas TH EMA was £400 over the year for all students meeting their criteria, with this new system there is no set amount that is guaranteed for every student applying to the fund. We are required to adjust the value of the support package according to individual circumstances.
- We are required to give this assistance 'in kind' wherever possible, rather than as a direct cash payment.
- We are actively exploring various other sources of funding in order to try to maximise the support available to students.
- Please do make sure you inform us of any change in your circumstances so that we can help you access any external sources of funding to which you may be entitled.

Free school meals

Please read this information very carefully, and you think you might be entitled to free school meals, do make sure you apply.

This will not only entitle you to a free lunch in school each day, but will also give universities and other programmes a better sense of your family's income level: something they will want to consider when assessing your application.

We are very happy to offer parents any further support they may need in understanding how this process works and making an application.

Information taken directly from council website (clickable links)

Qualification for free school meals is predicated on the parent(s) being in receipt of any of the following:

- 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 Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income of £16,190 or less
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit (provided their annual net earned income does not exceed £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of the most recent monthly assessment periods).

Children of Parents in Receipt of Universal Credit

Prior to 1 April 2018 children of parents in receipt of Universal Credit were entitled to free school meals. However, the Government has now limited eligibility for UC recipients by introducing a net annual earnings cap of £7,400, (£616.66 per month).

Transactional protection

Children who were getting Free School Meals on 31 March 2018, (including those children whose entitlement was based on the national universal FSM provisions) will continue to be entitled until UC is fully rolled out nationally regardless of any changes to the parent's income.

How to claim free school meals

The child's parent (or guardian) must make a claim either by:

- completing a paper copy of the claim form available from schools, our [One Stop Shops](#) or by telephoning the benefits service on 020 7364 5000
- making a claim for [housing](#) and/or [council tax benefit](#) (which also counts as a claim for free school meals – you do not need to complete a separate form in this case)

Information and evidence required

- the child's name, date of birth and school
- evidence of the parent's (or guardian's) income (unless this has been provided already)

Telling us about changes in circumstances

If you stop getting income support, income-based jobseeker's allowance, income-related employment and support allowance, pension guarantee credit or your annual income increases above the threshold amount or if you start to get working tax credit your child's entitlement to free school meals will end. Remember you must tell the benefits service about any changes to your income or circumstances. For example you must tell us if you child changes school and if you change address.

Children who attend schools in Tower Hamlets but whose parents live outside the borough

Some local authorities have reciprocal arrangements with Tower Hamlets. You would need to contact Tower Hamlets education services for advice.

Appeals

If your child or children are not entitled to free school meals you can appeal. However, the decision not to grant free school meals does not come under the normal benefit appeals process and cannot be changed unless you can show that the information used in making the decision was incorrect.

If you wish to discuss making an appeal, please call on 020 7364 5000. Appeals are dealt with by the council's education department, not the benefits service. Personal callers should visit their nearest [One Stop Shop](#) to hand in claim forms, obtain receipts and have original evidence photocopied.

16-19 bursary – discretionary student bursary

Information taken directly from gov.uk – further details on the school website

Institutions make discretionary bursary awards to students to help them overcome the individual barriers to participation they face. This means to help with the cost of travel, to buy essential books, equipment or specialist clothing. These are items the student would otherwise need to pay for in order to participate.

Institutions decide which students receive a discretionary bursary. They set their own eligibility criteria but must comply with the eligibility conditions of the scheme set out by the government. Institutions must ensure that students are eligible for the discretionary bursary in each year they require support.

All decisions about which students receive a discretionary bursary and how much bursary they receive must be based on each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need. These will vary from student to student, depending on, for example, their household income, the distance they need to travel to the institution and the requirements of their study programme. Institutions must not make blanket or flat rate payments to all students or to students in particular income bands without considering the actual needs of each student.

How we will manage bursary fund applications at Langdon Park in 2019/20

Any student may apply for support from the discretionary bursary fund. It is unlikely that a student who is not entitled to free school meals would be assessed as needing support from the fund, as we are required to prioritise those with the greatest financial need. However, we recognise that there may be times when a student may find themselves struggling financially even though they are not entitled to FSM. We also recognise that a student's circumstances and needs may change during the academic year. We will therefore allow students to apply for help from the bursary fund at any point during the year, and are required to keep some funds set aside as contingency for precisely this reason.

How applications will be assessed

More details can be found on the school website, but in brief:

- Application forms must be completed and returned *with all the required supporting evidence* by the **deadline of Thursday 31 October**.
- The 16-19 bursary distribution panel will then meet to assess all the applications and decide how best to allocate the funds. This panel consists of the Assistant Headteacher KS5 and the Head of Sixth Form.
- Outcomes will be communicated privately to students by November 21st at the latest.
- As with TH EMA, we are required to review a student's attendance and other factors before deciding to release their bursary funding. Where there is an issue, that student will be informed that their allocation is on hold, and will be set clear targets detailing the improvements required within a stated time frame. This will then be reviewed, and if the targets have been met, the funding will be released. If the targets have not been met, that student will lose the right to support for that period in the year. Their allocation will be retained in the 16-19 bursary fund and may be made available to others who may need it.
- If any student is unhappy with a decision taken by the bursary panel, they will have the right of appeal, and that appeal will be considered by the Headteacher and the School Business Manager.
- We take the privacy of your information very seriously, and our application process is designed to maintain confidentiality. Applications will be held securely and will only be viewed by people directly involved in assessing your application.
- We have a duty to ensure that the 16-19 bursary fund is distributed only to those with genuine need. We therefore require students and their families to provide detailed information on their household income and the student's personal financial circumstances. We also have to ask students and families to sign a declaration when they apply for help from the bursary to confirm that the evidence they have provided is correct and complete to the best of their knowledge and belief.

16-19 bursary – vulnerable groups bursary

Information taken directly from gov.uk – further details available in the sixth form area of the school website

Students who meet the criteria, and who have a financial need, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- in care
- care leavers
- receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them such as a child or partner
- receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right

The bursary for vulnerable groups can pay up to £1,200 per year to a student participating on a study programme that lasts for 30 weeks or more.

Institutions may decide that although a young person may be eligible for a bursary because they are in one or more of the defined vulnerable groups, they do not have any actual financial need. This might be because their financial needs are already met and/or because they have no relevant costs. Institutions can refuse a student's application on this basis. Similarly, students should only receive the amount they actually need to participate and not automatically receive £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

If you believe you fall into one of the 'vulnerable groups' categories, please speak to the Head of Sixth Form as soon as possible to get advice.

The government requires us to gather evidence of your eligibility, so it will take some time to gather all the paperwork required. The school would then submit your application and, if that application is successful, the government will allocate that extra funding to the school so that we can make payments to you throughout the year.

Access Universities and Apprenticeships Fund

We are very proud that so many of our students move on to highly respected universities or training schemes with city companies. We recognise that attending university open days and summer schools can be expensive, as can preparing for recruitment processes at city firms. We do not want any student to feel they cannot access these opportunities because they would struggle to meet the costs involved. We therefore set aside some of the 16-19 bursary fund to support students in accessing high-quality destinations, and top this up with funds from our sixth form budget. For example, we may pay the £25 UCAS application fee for students who are unable to meet this cost. Students can also apply to this fund for support with travel to open days and summer schools. A number of universities will reimburse travel costs for students from low-income families, but this may still be a barrier to our students if they are unable to pay these costs upfront initially. Our Head of Sixth Form will meet with students to explore their options and to arrange financial assistance where required.

Once students are in Year 13, they will be issued a specific university finance guide containing detailed information about applying for student finance and the scholarship and bursary funds available for certain universities and courses. Students are supported in assessing which options would best meet their needs. Likewise, any students interested in apprenticeship options will be given 1-1 support to help them identify which schemes best meet their requirements.

Examples of support provided:

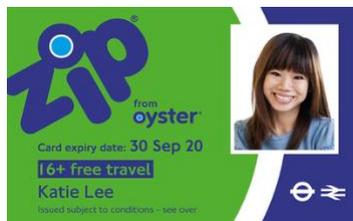
A bursary student with excellent GCSEs is encouraged to consider Oxbridge as a possible option. She joins our residential visit around the University of Oxford's Open Day at the start of Year 12. The school funds this in full. She then attends a subject specific taster day, and a residential summer school at Oxford. She enjoys both, but has concerns about the costs of living away from home. LPS direct her to a particular scholarship, and provides support for her application and her attendance at interview. She is awarded a full scholarship and is able to begin her course feeling financially secure and able to focus on her studies.

A bursary student wants to find an apprenticeship in the finance sector. The student is matched with a professional mentor and they meet regularly in central London. The school covers her travel costs. As the student approaches interview stage, the school then provides further support to ensure the student can feel confident and professional in appropriate business wear.

Hardship Fund

We recognise that there may be occasions when a sixth form student finds themselves in need of urgent financial assistance. Be assured that if any student finds themselves in such a situation, the school will always offer whatever support we can.

We are allowed to use 16-19 bursary funding to help students in times of crisis even if they have previously been assessed as ineligible for that funding. If this happens at a time when the 16-19 bursary fund does not have sufficient funds to meet this need, we would then offer support via the Headteacher's Hardship Fund, as well as helping them to access whatever external services and support they may require.



Travel costs

- The majority of our students live locally, but where students have further to travel, perhaps because they have moved house, those circumstances would be considered as part of their bursary application.
- Similarly, if a student needs to travel into central London regularly for meetings with a mentor or for a university programme, we would seek to support that student with their travel costs.
- The school will ensure that students have free travel for compulsory trips wherever possible.
- All students should obtain the relevant student oyster card to ensure they get discounted travel – the school office can stamp your application forms.

Apply online at <https://photocard.tfl.gov.uk/tfl/showLogon.do>

16-25 Railcard

If you use the train a lot, this railcard is well worth the investment. The fee of £30 per year entitles you to 1/3 off Standard Anytime, Off-Peak, Standard Advanced and First Class Advanced fares.

Buy online at <https://www.16-25railcard.co.uk>

Part time work

Many of you may want to consider getting a part-time job. Try to keep it to say two shifts a week, otherwise it can have a negative impact on your studies. The evidence suggests that anything above 10 hours a week makes it very difficult to stay on top of things. Ensure you cut back hours/take holiday around exams.

Consider alternative ways of making some extra money, such as signing up for focus groups like the ones run by this organisation. Speak to us for more information. Make sure any companies you look at independently are legitimate and trustworthy - get advice from us if you're [unsure](#).



DivInc helps provide opportunity for Gen Z to collaborate with brands for brutally honest insights on product, branding or marketing.

Students aged 16+ are paid up to £150 a day to work with brands. This is a unique opportunity for Gen Z to voice their opinions on some of the worlds biggest branding campaigns.

Volunteering at school

We cannot pay our students in cash for anything they may do for us in school. There are very clear rules about this. We can, however, reward your contribution with 'in kind' support, ie giving you things for free that you would otherwise have to pay for.

Examples:

A Year 12 student doing A Level Maths requires a graphical calculator for that course. She commits to spending a number of sessions helping Year 11s improve their Maths skills. The school then pays for her calculator.

On Tuesday afternoons, a group of sixthformers support Year 8s with their reading, and some Politics students run a current affairs discussion group for Year 10-13. They are all allocated credit on the school's book ordering system to be used for whatever books or revision guides they wish.

Some students taking Science A Levels help their teachers to run STEM after-school activities. The school then buys them revision guides for those A Levels.

Student discounts

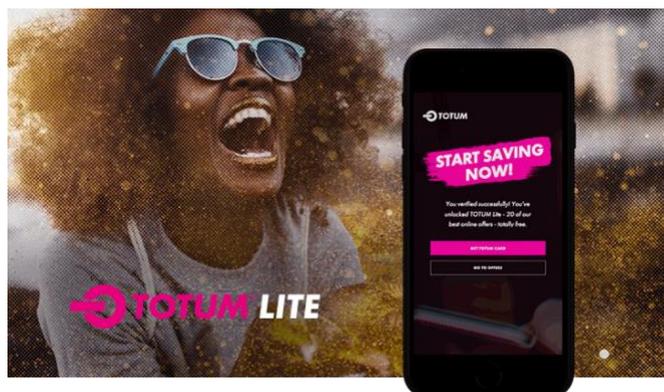
Check the following websites for potential student discounts:

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/deals/student-discounts>

<https://www.savethestudent.org/student-discounts>

<https://www.studentbeans.com/uk>

Sixth form students can also apply for a student discount card.



TOTUM student discount card and app replaced the old NUS card. TOTUM Lite is a free card, TOTUM extra offers greater discounts, plus it doubles as an ISIC card. TOTUM extra costs £14.99 per year. <https://www.totum.com>

UNiDAYS

UNiDAYS card is one of the free student discount cards that offers discount online and in-store. It uses an app in place of a plastic card. If you show your profile on the app while at a checkout, you can receive 10%-50% discount depending on the store. <https://www.myunidays.com/GB/en-GB>

Examples of student discounts locally:

Mon – Wed

Thurs

Fri - Sun

£5.50	£8	£8
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GENESIS

Sunday – Wed 6pm onwards, game of bowling and karaoke for £5
50% off food

