

School Support Fund (SSF)

Essential school uniform, warm winter clothing, footwear, school equipment, food and essentials household items to support families facing financial difficulties

Guidance Notes

The aim of the fund

As a result of COVID and other issues affecting global markets, many families who were already struggling have had additional financial pressure placed upon them especially with the rising cost of living. Some families have had a swift fall in income due to unemployment, waiting for first Universal Credit payments or the universal credit top-up being withdrawn etc. As a result, many families are finding it difficult to afford school uniform, equipment, food and essential items.

Durham County Council are providing a 'School Support Fund' as a result of one-off funding received from the government. Schools/colleges will receive a small grant to support their most vulnerable families facing financial difficulties and ensure that children and young people are able to attend education settings with the required resources.

Financial Hardship

Education settings must be able to confirm the reason(s) the household they are supporting is in financial hardship; this could include:

- Job loss
- Relationship breakdown
- Unexpected bill / increase in utility costs
- Fleeing domestic abuse
- Unexpected house move e.g. eviction
- Delay in benefits payment
- Illness/disability
- Serious risk to health and safety of resident
- Sudden misfortune involving the destruction or loss of property or belongings e.g. house fire, flood
- Death of a family member
- Not receiving any monies from DWP, sanction, disallowance or waiting for UC payment
- Resettlement back into the community

What can schools / colleges use the funding for

- Essential school uniform and equipment including stationery, school bags.
- Winter clothing (including coats, hats, gloves, underwear /socks
- Footwear
- PE kit
- Family food parcels / vouchers
- Essential household items including white goods
- Other Essential Items (including clothing, bedding, personal hygiene and cleaning products)

The funding can support **ANY** family the school/college have identified are facing financial difficulty (this includes children not eligible for EYPP or Free School Meals). Funding can be used to support pre-school and 6th form provision attached to a school.

What can't be funded:

- School transport
- Reimbursement of costs already incurred
- School meals
- School trips/after school activities.
- Non-essential household items

How much will schools /colleges receive?

Based on the Spring 2022 census (nursery to KS5) schools will receive funding based on Free School Meals and EYPP in the following bands.

Band	Total number of EYPP and FSM pupils on school roll (nursery to KS5)	Maximum £
A	0 - 25	400
B	26 - 50	500
C	51 - 100	800
D	101 - 150	1200
E	151 - 200	1700
F	201 +	2200

How will funding be made available to schools / colleges?

Timescales

Please note funding will be transferred to school / college budgets by the end of October.

Schools / colleges will have until July 2023 to use the funding to support children and their families.

Education finance will arrange for a journal transfer of funds to Durham County Council maintained school or a bank transfer to academies.

Maintained schools will see the additional funds transferred into income account code '740298 – other school related grants' – academies will receive admittances advice containing reference to 'SSF'. Schools must purchase items directly and keep evidence of spend for audit purposes.

How are goods purchased?

The school / college should purchase the goods on behalf of families and retain proof of purchase. **Families should not be given cash.**

White goods can be purchased from East Durham Partnership or County Durham Furniture Scheme (contact details below). By purchasing items from these organisations:

- Each of these items carry a full 12 months replace or repair guarantee; the registration document will be inside each appliance for the household to activate the warranty. Failure to do so could invalidate warranty.

- Should a repair or replacement be necessary the school or household are to contact the manufacturer direct, as with any commercial company.
- If installation is carried out by anyone other than the supplier of goods (East Durham Partnership/County Durham Furniture Help Scheme) the warranty will be void; please do not advise families/individuals to attempt installation themselves.

<p>Neil Sargeant East Durham Partnership 1 Kilburn Drive Seaview Industrial Estate Horden SR8 4TQ Tel: (0191) 586 8493 nsargeant@eastdurhampartnership.co.uk</p>	<p>Steve Mitton/Shannon Heightley County Durham Furniture Help Scheme Unit 20, Avenue 3 Chilton Industrial Estate Chilton County Durham DL17 0PB Tel: 9.30-2.00 to 01388-721509 our main number or mobile outside of those times of if ANY ISSUE at all to 07709-088426. steve.mitton@cdfhs.org.uk shannon.heightley@cdfhs.org.uk</p>
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Monitoring and Evaluation

To allow us to evidence the impact the SSF has on a child/young person and their family we need to collect feedback from each education setting. We may ask for case studies to support this.