

## What is the RET Hardship Fund?

Riviera Education Trust recognises that there are families that might need support from time to time during their child's education. The Trustees have therefore established a Hardship Fund to help support these families with a discretionary source of financial help.

The aim of the Fund is to help students who have difficulties in paying for:

- Curriculum trips, visits, year group residential courses and other activities
- Uniform, shoes or sports kit
- Other materials or equipment to assist in academic studies
- Other necessary expenses

Payments from the fund are discretionary and the trust has no obligation to make them. Payments are a grant, not a loan, and do not need to be repaid. There are limited resources available each academic year from the Hardship Fund.

Funds are topped up through fundraising and voluntary contributions. Donations of school uniform, sports kit and equipment to the Fund are welcomed.

## Who is eligible?

Rather than using income as the deciding factor we will consider the following criteria:

- Families informing the school that they are in an immediate state of crisis who are not currently entitled to free school meals (FSM)
- Families who we are referring to the food bank but are struggling for food whilst their referral is processed
- Families who may have been impacted by job loss, loss of self-employed income or those already impacted by in-work poverty
- Families where childcare issues have resulted in job loss or reduction of hours forcing a crisis
- Families waiting for benefits claims to be assessed resulting in short term poverty if emergency grants are pending or have already been used up
- Families where we have identified that a young person is acting as a carer, thus creating additional vulnerabilities and pressures
- Families currently impacted by homelessness

Even if these conditions are not met, the CEO has discretion to allow other cases to be met from the Hardship Fund if he considers there is good reason.

## What evidence do I need to show?

We don't formally ask for evidence for this application; an application letter or interview that details your family circumstances is usually all that is required to make a decision. We might contact you if we need more information. All forms, correspondence and communication will be dealt with in the strictest confidence by the trust.

## How much can I receive?

The maximum amount a family can receive from the fund would be £250 per academic year. This is the maximum and the actual amount may be lower than this.

## How do I apply?

Please complete a Hardship Fund Application and return to: [finance@rivieraet.co.uk](mailto:finance@rivieraet.co.uk). If you prefer not to submit a written application, please contact your school office and an interview can be arranged. Students and parents cannot appeal a decision not to award a hardship grant as the trust's decision is final.