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**Press release: December 19, 2022**

**College helps students through tough financial times**

Telford College is providing more financial support than ever to help students with the cost of their education.

The level of financial support given to students this year has risen by around 30% through a combination of bursaries towards course fees, public transport passes, and subsidised meals.

And the message to families who are finding things tough with the rising cost of living is: Speak to us, as we may be able to help.

So far this year, Telford College has more than doubled the amount of money spent on supporting students with free meals while at college.

More than 12,000 free breakfasts have been issued to all students since September – and the initiative has now been extended to cover the spring 2023 term.

Telford College also helps students to cover the cost of public transport, and has seen a 36% increase in bus passes offered to eligible students.

It is currently analysing student travel needs with the aim of providing extra bus routes in and around the town - starting with an additional trial pick up for Madeley and Woodside in January.

The college has also increased the number of laptops provided to students who are unable to access technology or the internet while studying at home, by around 16%.

The laptops and dongles have been financed through a college fund which is set aside to provide support for disadvantaged and vulnerable students.

Graham Guest, Telford College principal and chief executive, said: “We want students to know that, if they are struggling to cover the cost of coming to college, there is support available.

“We have a number of schemes on offer to those that qualify, which can cover anything from travel expenses and childcare fees to course materials, college meals, exam fees, educational visits, and more.

“There are also a significant number of our courses which are free. For those in genuine need, we are determined to do everything we can to remove barriers to education.”

**ENDS**