



## 16-19 Bursary Fund Policy 2025-26

Last Review = September 2023

### Principles and Objectives

This policy aims to ensure that students who are eligible for the 16-19 Bursary funding are given the opportunity to succeed in the pursuit of academic achievement and personal development. Thus, ensuring that the funding is spent effectively and that staff and governors make decisions that aim to narrow the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and those who are not disadvantaged.

### Review terms

This policy will be reviewed every three years unless there are relevant statutory or funding changes before this.

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#### 1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Have a clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of 16 to 19 bursary funds
- Make clear to parents and students the type of support which is available and the means of applying for it

#### 2. Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on the [16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide: 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#). This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

#### 3. Definitions

- 'In care' is defined as: children looked after by a local authority on a voluntary basis (section 20 of the Children Act 1989) or under a care order (section 31 of the Children Act 1989). Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 defines the term 'looked after child'

- ‘Care leaver’ is defined as:
  - A young person aged 16 and 17 who was previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16, **or**
  - A young person aged 18 or above who was looked after prior to becoming 18 for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods of 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16)

#### **4. Roles and responsibilities**

##### **4.1 The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

##### **4.2 Staff**

Our staff are responsible for implementing the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy consistently.

The senior leadership team will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

##### **4.3 Parents or Carers**

Parents are expected to notify staff or the Headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy.

#### **5. How we use the bursary fund**

Support is available to eligible students from the 16 to 19 bursary fund. See section 6 below for details of our eligibility criteria.

The fund is intended to support students aged 16 to 19 in overcoming specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

- We use the fund to provide students with support to fund:
  - Books
  - Equipment
  - Field trips and other course-related costs
  - The costs of attending university interviews and open days

#### **6. Eligibility criteria**

##### **6.1 Age**

To be eligible:

- A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2025

Students 19 or over must either:

- Be continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18, or
- Have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

## 6.2 Eligible education provision

Students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assure quality (e.g. Ofsted). The provision must also be either:

- Funded directly by ESFA or by ESFA via a local authority
- Funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund
- Publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) accredited by Ofqual or on the ESFA list of qualifications approved for funding 14 to 19
- In a 16 to 19 traineeship programme
- Non-employed and participating in a Prince's Trust Team Programme

Students are not eligible if:

- They are on an apprenticeship programme
- Are on any waged training

## 6.3 Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in the [ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision](#).

## 6.4 Asylum seekers

Those under 18 with an adult relative or partner and those aged 18 and above:

- Are entitled to education
- Are not entitled to public funds
- Can apply to the Home Office for suitable housing and cash for essentials

We will provide in-kind support such as books, equipment and a travel pass to asylum seekers who have not had asylum refused.

Unaccompanied children:

- Are the responsibility of the local authority
- Are to be treated as 'looked after' children
- Are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups

When these students reach 18 we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary if the asylum claim is in their favour and will be treated as a 'care leaver' until they reach the upper age limit.

## 6.5 Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups

Students who meet one of the following four criteria below, in addition to the above age and residency criteria, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups of up to £1,200 per year.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- In care (those who are privately fostered are **not** classed as looked after)
- 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

We will look at individual cases for these students, based on needs. Students will only receive the amount they actually need to participate and not automatically receive £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

Students eligible for bursaries under this category will be given a pro rata bursary if their study programme lasts for less than 30 weeks.

We will obtain the following **proof of eligibility** for vulnerable groups:

- For students who are in care or a care leaver, written confirmation of their current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority. The evidence could be a letter or an email but must be clearly from the local authority
- For students in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit, a copy of their Income Support or Universal Credit award notice. This must clearly state that the claim is in the student's name/confirm they are entitled to the benefits in their own right. The evidence must not state any conditions that prevent them from participating in further education or training
- For students in receipt of Universal Credit (UC), a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificates, utility bills etc.
- For students receiving UC/Employment and Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments, a copy of their UC claim from DWP (UC claimants should be able to print off details of their award from their online account). Evidence of receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment, must also be provided

## 6.6 Discretionary bursaries

In assessing an application for a discretionary bursary, we will consider:

- Level of household income
- Distance to travel between the student's home and the institution
- The number of dependent children in the student's household
- Whether the student has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help

To assess household income, we will ask to see the following evidence:

**1. Gross annual household income, as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs, does not exceed £25,000**

Evidence: Latest Tax Credit Award Notice (TCAN) for the young person's household. This document from HM Revenue & Customs details entitlement to Tax Credits and the total income for the year April 2024 to April 2025.

#### Evidence Required:

- P60 End of Year Certificate for all adults in the young person's household who contribute to the household costs. This certificate states the earnings from an employer. It must be for the correct adult(s) and for the correct tax year (2024/2025). The income will be shown as Total for year.
- Self-Assessment Tax Calculation (SA302). This is the equivalent of the P60 for self-employed people. It must be for the correct adult(s) and for the correct Tax Year (2024/2025). The income will be shown as Total for year.
- Universal Credit Award Notices - 3 most recent monthly award statements

#### **2. Where the young person's parent/guardian/carer(s) are in receipt of one of the following (evidence will be required):**

- Income support (3 most recent months as evidence)
- Universal Credit (3 most recent months as evidence)
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance,
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance,
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

## **7. Payment**

### **7.1 Process**

Payments are made using the following process:

- Make in-kind payments, such as travel passes and clothing
- Purchase of books and equipment for educational use
- Support with the financial costs of field trips and other course related costs
- Support with the financial costs of visiting University Open Days

Applications should be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> September to make sure enough time is allocated to assess the overall level of demands and make discretionary awards on a fair basis. This date will be clearly stated on the application form. However, as students' circumstances may change, the application process will remain open for the whole school year.

## **7.2 Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments**

Payments are conditional on students meeting the following conditions in relation to their standards of attendance and behaviour:

- Attendance above 90%
- Following our Sixth Form expectations as outlined in the Sixth Form Home-School learning agreement

All students are required to sign a declaration confirming that they agree to these conditions.

Students who fail to meet these conditions may have their payment withheld.

We will consider the impact on attendance that might be caused by illness, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances.

We will stop payments where students have been absent for a period of 4 continuous weeks or more (excluding holidays, or if there is evidence that the student intends to return).

As much as possible, we will avoid sanctioning a student to the extent that their bursary funding had been stopped for a whole term.

We recommend that students provide a list with their application of resources they may need so that they can be sourced for the student.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed by the Head of Sixth Form every three years unless there are relevant statutory or funding changes before this. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher.