

## 16 to 19 Bursary Fund policy

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### 1. Introduction

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome the financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education.

The school's funding is limited and is based on funds allocated by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

This policy is based on guidance from the ESFA on the [16 to 19 bursary fund](#).

### 2. Eligibility for support

- Students must be aged 16 or over, but under 19 on 31 August in the relevant year
- Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing a study programme that they started aged 16-18 or have an EHCP.
- Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for the vulnerable groups bursary.
- Students must meet the residency criteria in the [ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision](#).

**See Appendix 1: Definitions**

Allocation of funds is determined by each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need. The allocation of funds is subject to audit so evidence will be required to support any application.

**See Appendix 2: Evidence**

The bursary is used to provide students with support to fund: books, equipment, travel and transport and course related costs.

### 3. Bursaries available at Fortismere

#### 3.1 Vulnerable Students Bursary

Students in defined vulnerable groups are eligible for up to £1200 per year. The 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; or
- Receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance ESA or Universal Credit in their own right

**See Appendix 1: Definitions**

Students who meet the criteria for a vulnerable student bursary are not automatically entitled to a bursary. Students will not receive a bursary if they do not have any actual financial need (for example, because their financial needs are met from other sources or they have no relevant costs).

Students will only receive the amount they actually need to participate and will not automatically receive £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

We will review eligibility each academic year. Students will only continue to receive a vulnerable student bursary if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

### **3.2 Discretionary Bursary**

The Discretionary bursary will be available to students from low household incomes. The eligibility criteria for this bursary will be the same as for eligibility for free school meals. Currently, students will be eligible to apply for this discretionary bursary if their parents/carers receive one of the benefits or NASS support shown below:

- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowances ESA(IR)
- Child Tax Credit providing you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and your annual income as assessed by Revenues and Customs is below £16,190
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Or if you are supported by NASS and supported under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Students who do not satisfy any of the criteria listed in this section, but who are able to evidence financial hardship arising from other reasons, may also apply for a discretionary bursary.

There is no set limit for the amount of discretionary bursary that can be awarded to students. Decisions will be based around which students receive a discretionary bursary, how much bursary they receive, each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need.

The amount of discretionary bursary funding that the school can allocate to students is limited and based on the amount of funding given to the school by the ESFA.

We will review eligibility each academic year. Students will only continue to receive a discretionary bursary if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

## **4. Applications**

Applications should be submitted by the 30<sup>th</sup> September.

This deadline will allow enough time to assess the overall level of demand and make discretionary awards on a fair basis.

However, we acknowledge that students' circumstances may change and therefore the application process will remain open for the whole school year.

Applications are made online via a google form available on the school website.

Applicants will be notified by email whether their application has been successful, together with the amount of funding awarded. If a student wishes to appeal the outcome of their application for a bursary, they must follow the school's complaints procedure.

## 5. Payment process

Payments are made using the following process:

- Termly payments (towards the end of each term) by BACS transfer to the student's bank account.

## 6. Conditions for receipt of bursary payments

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

- Minimum attendance of 95% excluding authorised absences supported by evidence (there is an expectation that all students should aim for 100% attendance); and
- A maximum of one late mark per week (there is an expectation that students attend all lessons and sessions punctually; and
- Following the Fortismere Sixth Form Expectations.

By submitting an application for a bursary students are confirming that they will agree to these conditions.

Students who fail to meet these conditions may have their payments withheld, but we will always take students' individual circumstances into consideration. This includes considering the impact on attendance that might be caused by illness, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances.

We will automatically stop payments where students have been absent for a period of 4 continuous weeks or more (excluding holidays) and where students have decided to withdraw from a study programme.

We reserve the right to take back money from students where it is not spent for the reasons it was awarded.

## 7. Change in circumstances

If there are changes in circumstances which may affect eligibility for a bursary, applicants/those in receipt of a bursary, must notify the school without delay.

## 8. Record keeping

Any paperwork and documents we retain for audit purposes (for example, applications and documents as evidence) will be kept securely in line with our data protection policy and privacy notices.

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the Sixth Form Leadership Team and approved by the CoHeadteachers.

**Policy date:** January 2023

**Review cycle:** 2 years

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## Appendix 1: 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)
- 'Looked after child' is defined as: a child in the care of a local authority or who is provided with accommodation by the authority in the exercise of any functions for more than 24 hours (section 22 of the Children Act 1989)

- '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 amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16

## **Appendix 2: Evidence**

All applications for 16 to 19 bursaries must be supported by appropriate evidence. Examples of acceptable evidence are:

- A copy of the UC or IS award notice, in the student's name (for vulnerable student bursary)
- Documents such as a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, birth certificate or utility bills (for vulnerable student bursary)
- Written confirmation of the student's current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority (for vulnerable student bursary)
- A copy of a UC claim from Department of Work and Pensions
- Evidence of eligibility for free school meals or receipt of benefits
- Evidence of household income such as P60, receipt of tax credit
- All applicants will have to show a passport or equivalent proof to demonstrate they meet the residency requirements of the scheme
- All applicants must have their own bank account in their name