



Ousedale School

Be Kind | Work Hard | Succeed Together

16 to 19 Bursary Fund Policy

Reviewed and approved by Quality of Education Committee	31.01.22
Approved by Full Governors	21.2.22

1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of 16 to 19 bursary funds
- Make clear to parents/carers and pupils the type of support which is available and the means of applying for it
- Make clear to parents and pupils the attendance and behaviour conditions for receiving the funds

2. Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on the 16 to 19 bursary fund for the 2021 to 2022 academic year.

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).

'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

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The governing board

The governing board has overall responsibility for approving this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy, but delegate this to the headteacher.

The governing board has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy and will receive an annual report on the number of bursaries granted and how funds have been spent.

4.2 Assistant Headteacher - Director of Sixth Form

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

4.3 Staff

Our staff are responsible for implementing this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy consistently. Staff will be provided with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4 Parents

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

5. How we use the bursary fund

Financial 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 pupils aged 16 to 19 in overcoming specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are two types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups; and
- Discretionary bursaries

We use the fund to provide pupils with support to fund:

- Transport
- Books
- IT/Specialist equipment
- Field trips and other course-related costs
- The costs of attending university interviews and open days
- Clothing to ensure the Sixth Form dress code is adhered to
- Meal allowance (if not already in receipt of Free School Meals)

6. Eligibility criteria for the 16 to 19 bursaries

6.1 Age

To be eligible for either bursary in the 2021 to 2022 academic year, pupils must be at least 16 years old but under 19 years old on 31 August 2021.

Pupils aged 19 or over are eligible only for a discretionary bursary if they:

- Are continuing on a study programme or course which they began when they were aged 16 to 18 years old, or
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

Pupils aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for defined vulnerable groups.

In exceptional circumstances, where pupils under 16 years old are on a funded 16 to 19 study programme at our school, we may use our discretion to pay bursaries to these younger pupils. However, if these pupils are enrolled at another institution that receives public funding for them, they will not be eligible for bursary funding.

6.2 Eligible education provision

Pupils must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (e.g. Ofsted). The provision must also fall into one of these groups:

- Be funded directly by ESFA or by ESFA via a local authority;
- Be funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund;
- Be otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual or is on the ESFA's list of qualifications approved for funding 14 to 19; or
- Be a 16 to 19 traineeship programme

Non-employed pupils aged 16 to 19 who are participating in a Prince's Trust Team Programme are also eligible to receive a bursary in the same way as any other pupil participating in an eligible, publicly funded course.

Pupils are not eligible if:

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

Pupils who are studying via distance learning are eligible for either 16 to 19 bursary but are likely to require financial help on a more infrequent basis (e.g. travel to exams). If this is the case, we will provide support in-kind, such as a travel pass, details of which shall be decided on a case by case basis.

6.3 Residency

Pupils must meet the residency criteria in the ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision.

6.4 Asylum seekers

Accompanied asylum seekers under 18 with an adult relative or partner and asylum seekers aged 18 and above are entitled to education but are not entitled to public funds. If necessary, they 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 asylum seeking children:

- Are the responsibility of the local authority;
- Are to be treated as 'looked after' children; and
- Are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups, where they have a financial need

When these pupils reach 18 years old, we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary as a pupil from a defined vulnerable group 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

Pupils with a financial need, who meet one of the following 4 criteria below, in addition to the criteria outlined in sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 above, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups.

The defined vulnerable groups are pupils who are:

- In care (NB: those who are privately fostered are not classed as looked after);
- Care leavers;
- Receiving Income Support (IS), or Universal Credit (UC) 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 (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIPs) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right

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

Where a bursary is provided, the funds will generally be up to £1,200 per year for study programmes lasting 30 weeks or more. When calculating the amount, we will look at cases individually and base the outcome on a particular pupil's needs. Pupils 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 can use our discretion, on a case by case basis, and provide more than £1,200 per year if such would be necessary in all the circumstances for the pupil to remain in education. Any such additional payment will be paid either from our discretionary bursary allocation or our own funds.

If a pupil's study programme lasts for less than 30 weeks, they will be paid a pro-rata amount. We will also consider the number of hours involved in a pupil's study programme when deciding whether a pro-rata payment is more appropriate.

We will review the pupil's eligibility position each academic year. Pupils will only continue to receive a bursary for vulnerable groups if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

6.6 Discretionary bursaries

In addition to the criteria outlined in sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 above, pupils can apply for discretionary bursary if they satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

- Pupils who are eligible for free school meals and whose household income is below £16,190.

Further application will be considered where the household income is below £25,000

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

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

- Level of household income
- Distance to travel between the pupil's home and the institution, or a location for a placement
- The number of dependent children in the pupil's household
- The requirements of their study programme
- Whether the pupil has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help

There is no set limit for the amount of discretionary bursary that can be awarded to pupils. We will base all decisions around which pupils receive a discretionary bursary, and how much bursary they receive, on each pupil's individual circumstances and their actual financial need.

We will review the pupil's eligibility position each academic year. Pupils will only continue to receive a discretionary bursary if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

6.7 Evidence

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

- Previous 3 to 6 months' worth of payslips;
- P60;
- Written confirmation of a pupil's current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority; and/or
- Written confirmation of a benefit award or tax credit notice, in the name of the pupil (for either bursary) or the parent (for the discretionary bursary)

7. Application and payment process

7.1 Applications

Applications should ideally be submitted to allow enough time for our school to assess the overall level of demand and make discretionary awards on a fair basis. This date will be clearly stated on the application form. However, we

acknowledge that pupils' circumstances may change and therefore the application process will remain open for the whole school year.

Application forms are available from the 6th Form Administration Team.

Applicants will be notified in writing (either via email or via letter) whether their application has been successful, together with the amount of funding awarded. If a pupil wishes to appeal the outcome of their application for a bursary, they must follow the school's complaints procedure.

7.2 Payment process

Payments are made using the following process:

- In-kind payments, such as travel passes, books, equipment or vouchers for meals
- Weekly payments by BACS transfer to the pupil's bank account

7.3 Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments

Payments of the bursary are conditional on pupils meeting the following the Sixth Form code of conduct in addition to:

- 100% attendance
- Punctual to lessons and register your attendance
- Get permission in advance if you need to take time off

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

Pupils who fail to meet these conditions may have their payment withheld, but we will always take pupils' 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 stop payments where pupils have been absent for a period of 4 continuous weeks or more (excluding holidays) and where pupils have decided to withdraw from a study programme. We reserve the right to take back money from pupils where it is not spent for the reasons it was awarded.

We will consider the impact of such an action on the individual pupil before taking a final decision to do so, and any decision will be confirmed to the pupil in writing.

8. Change in circumstances

If there are changes in circumstances which may affect eligibility for a bursary, applicants and/or parents/carers must notify the school without delay.

9. Record keeping

Any paperwork and documents we retain for audit purposes (for example, copies of application forms, household income evidence and any agreements signed by pupils) will be kept securely in line with our data protection policy, privacy notices and record retention schedule.