Brooklands School

16 – 19 Bursary Fund Policy

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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 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 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2022-to-2023-academic-year.

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 body

The governing body has overall responsibility for approving this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

The governing body also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

In our school, responsibility for approving this policy has been delegated to Headteacher

In our school, monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the governing body

4.2 The headteacher

The 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.

The senior leadership team will provide staff 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 students 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 students with support to fund:

Add to/amend this list as necessary:

- Transport
- Books
- Equipment
- Field trips and other course-related costs
- The costs of attending college interviews and open days

6. Eligibility criteria for the 16 to 19 bursaries

6.1 Age

To be eligible for either bursary in the 2023 to 2024 academic year, students must be at least 16 years old but under 19 years old on 31 August 2023.

Students 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

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

6.2 Eligible education provision

Students 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 students 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 student participating in an eligible, publicly funded course.

Students are not eligible if:

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

Students 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

Students 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 students reach 18 years old, we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary as a student 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

Students 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 students 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

Students who meet the criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups are not automatically entitled to a bursary. Students 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 student's needs. 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 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 student to remain in education. Any such additional payment will be paid either from our discretionary bursary allocation or our own funds.

If a student'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 student's study programme when deciding whether a pro-rata payment is more appropriate.

We will review the student's eligibility position each academic year. Students 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, students can apply for a discretionary bursary if they satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

Annual household income needs to be below £21,000 per year or must be in receipt of Universal Credit/Tax Credit (please see 6.7 regarding evidencing).

Students 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 student's home and the institution, or a location for a placement
- The number of dependent children in the student's household
- Whether the student has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help

The limit for the amount of discretionary bursary that can be awarded to students is set by school but is dependent upon our funding allocation from EFSA. We will base all decisions around which students receive a discretionary bursary, and how much bursary they receive, on each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need.

We will review the student's eligibility position each academic year. Students 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 student'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 student (for either bursary) or the parent (for the discretionary bursary)

7. Application and payment process

7.1 Applications

Applications should ideally be submitted by September 30, 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 students' circumstances may change and therefore the application process will remain open for the whole school year.

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 student 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:

- Make in-kind payments, such as travel costs, books, equipment or vouchers for meals

7.3 Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments

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

- Attendance above 90% (subject to exceptional circumstances)

Students who fail to meet these conditions may have their payment 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 consider the impact of such an action on the individual student before taking a final decision to do so, and any decision will be confirmed to the student 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 students) will be kept securely in line with our data protection policy, privacy notices and record retention schedule. (parents can access information by making a request.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Headteacher every year. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.