



GREATFIELDS SCHOOL

16 to 19 bursary fund policy

Academic Year 2025-26

Approved by SLT:

Date: September 2025

Approved by Local Governing Board:

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Next Review

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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
- Make clear to parents and students 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 guide 2025-2026](#)

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 can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

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

In our school, responsibility for approving this policy has been delegated to the headteacher. In our school, monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the governors' finance committee.

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 2 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:

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

6. Eligibility criteria for the 16 to 19 bursaries

6.1 Age

A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2025 to be eligible for help from the bursary fund in academic year 2025 to 2026.



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The only exceptions for the discretionary bursary are students aged 19 and who are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers) or students aged 19 or over who have an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan.

These 2 groups of aged 19+ students can receive a discretionary bursary while they continue to attend education (in the case of a 19+ continuer, this must be the same programme they started before they turned 19), as long as their eligibility continues, and you consider they need the support to continue their participation.

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

You should generally only pay bursaries to students aged 16 or over. However, in exceptional circumstances where under 16 students are on funded 16 to 19 study programmes at the institution, you may use your discretion to pay bursaries to younger students. For example, where a student is following an accelerated study programme.

Bursary funds must not be awarded to students enrolled at another institution, where that institution also receives public funding for the student, for example, students aged 14 to 16 who are attending college as part of their key stage 4 programme at a local school/ academy. DfE funding rules for post-16 provision provide more detail about funded 14- to 16-year-olds.

Students aged under 19 enrolled on higher education qualifications are not eligible for support from the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

6.2 Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in DfE funding rules for post-16 provision. This document also specifies the evidence institutions must see and retain for audit to confirm eligibility for post-16 funding (and therefore meet the residency criteria for bursary fund eligibility).

6.3 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 and 6.2 and 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



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UC has now replaced IS, as well as other benefits above, for current and future young people aged 16 to 18. However, students aged 19 to 25 and funded from the 16 to 19 budget (19+ continuers and students with an EHC plan) may still receive the legacy benefits listed above.

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, cases will be looked at individually and base the outcome based 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.

We will provide this support for students from the bursary fund by making payments in kind where possible.

It will not be provided as regular payments for living costs.

6.4 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:

a) Discretionary Bursary – Band 1. Those whose household income is £16,190 or less per year and the family is in receipt of UC. The amount paid will be dependent upon the total allocated to the school for the academic year and will be larger than Band 2.

b) Discretionary Bursary – Band 2. Those whose household income is £16,190 - £20,817 per year and the family is in receipt of UC. The amount paid will be dependent upon the total allocated to the school for the academic year and will be less than Band 1.

c) Discretionary Bursary – Band 3. Those whose household income is more than £20,817, but less than £25,521 per year and the family is in receipt of UC. The amount paid will be



dependent upon the total allocated to the school for the academic year and will be less than Band 2.

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
- The requirements of their study programme
- Whether the student 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 students. 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.

You must obtain proof that students meet the criteria for the bursary for vulnerable groups in full. In other words, that they are in receipt of the specified benefits in their own name or that they fully meet the definitions for in care/care leavers. You must ask for evidence from each student and retain copies for audit purposes:

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 – this is the local authority that looks after them or provides their leaving care services. The evidence could be a letter or an email but must be clearly from the local authority.

For students in receipt of UC or IS, a copy of their UC or IS 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 UC, you must also see a document such as a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificates, utility bills and so on.

For students receiving UC/ESA and DLA and PIP, a copy of their UC award notice from DWP and evidence of receipt of DLA or PIP.



UC claimants can print off details of their award from their online account or provide a screenshot to the institution.

Students can also contact their UC work coach (or relevant benefit office if they are receiving IS or ESA) and ask them for help in providing evidence of receiving benefits.

You must only submit a funding claim to DfE:

when you have seen and verified appropriate evidence to confirm that the student is eligible for the bursary for vulnerable groups, and when you have assessed the actual amount of help the student needs, based on the actual participation costs they have. It is the actual amount that institutions must request on the funding claim, not automatically a request of £1,200. We may require evidence, as part of our pre-payment checks, to support the amount and purpose of the funding being requested

7. Application and payment process

7.1 Applications

Applications should ideally be submitted by October 21st 2025 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.

Decisions on eligibility will be made by the Sixth Form Assessment Panel following the completion of the application form and submission of its listed documents.

Applicants will be notified in writing (via 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.

7.2 Payment process

Orders for goods are made using the following process:

1. Students to submit an order on their Applicaa account.
2. The Sixth Form Administrator will submit this order to the school's Finance Department
3. The school's Finance Department will make the order with the student's bursary money and deduct this from their allowance.
4. The student will be notified when their order has arrived to school.

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 and behaviour:

- 98% attendance for each week
- Attendance to all lessons, supervised study and other EEP hours (Employability, Enrichment and Pastoral)



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- Exemplary conduct towards staff and all members of the school community
- Excellent punctuality
- Adherence to the dress code

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, 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 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. 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, documents as evidence and any agreements signed by students) will be kept securely in line with our data protection policy, privacy notices and record retention schedule. These are available to you at any time on request.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Assistant headteacher in charge of Sixth Form every year. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher.