

Waddesdon CE School: 16-19 Bursary Policy 2023-2024

The Government allocates schools a Bursary Fund to provide financial support for Sixth Form students from vulnerable groups and low-income backgrounds to enable them to participate in post 16 education and overcome financial barriers which might limit participation. This policy explains how Waddesdon CE School will administer and distribute these funds, based on guidance from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

Waddesdon CE School recognises that offering support to students from vulnerable groups and low-income backgrounds requires sensitivity and confidentiality for those concerned.

Eligibility

Age: Young people must be over the age of 16 but under 19 years old on 31st August 2023, in the academic year they start the course to qualify. Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers) or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

These two 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 their institution considers they need the support to continue their participation. Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for vulnerable groups.

Residency: Young people must be ordinarily and legally resident in the UK and satisfy the residency criteria in the document ESFA Funding Guidance: Funding Regulations. This is verified at Year 12 Enrolment.

Programme of Study: Students must be participating in educational provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (for example, Ofsted) and funded by the government.

Three groups of young people are eligible to apply for the 16-19 Bursary to cover essential costs, if they have a financial need:

Group 1) Students who meet one of the four bullet point criteria below, and who have a financial need, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups of up to £1,200 per year:

- in care
- care leavers (see ESFA guidance for definition, including private foster care)
- 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
- receiving Disability Living Allowance (PLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit (UC) in their own right

Please note it must be the student in these categories and not their parents/carers. The government stresses that this is not a guaranteed bursary; it is up to the amount stated, and the young person must be eligible against the criteria above and have a financial need to cover essential costs. The student must be participating in a study programme which is 30 weeks or more, otherwise a pro-rata amount should be paid.

Group 2) Students whose gross household income is up to £16,190 per year, will be eligible for a discretionary bursary. The amount of money given to students in this category will depend on how much money we are allocated by the government, the number of students who meet these criteria and their financial needs.

Group 3) In the event that there are surplus funds after the allocation of bursaries to students who fall into Groups 1 and 2 outlined above, a smaller discretionary bursary, will be allocated to students whose gross household income is up to £24,000. Again, the amount will depend on how many students apply who meet these criteria and their financial needs, as well how much money we have been allocated by the government.

Applications and Assessment

Waddesdon CE School will make every effort to ensure all students who are entitled to financial support from the Bursary will receive it. Details of the Bursary Fund and the application process will be displayed on the school website, letters will be sent home to parents/carers at the beginning of each academic year, and announcements will be made in assembly, with information on ClassCharts. The application form and letter are shown in Appendix 1 and 2.

Students applying for the Bursary Fund will be required to provide valid evidence to support their application e.g. Income Support certificate, Universal Credit certificate, Disability Living Allowance certificate, Tax Award letter from the Inland Revenue, a letter from Job Centre Plus setting out the benefit to which the young person is entitled, or written confirmation from the Local Authority of the young person's current or previous looked after status.

Students will also have to outline their financial need and what they propose to use their bursary payments for e.g. to contribute towards transport costs, equipment, books or residential costs, essential to the student's Programme of Study. The government asks us to stress that there is a possibility of no award or a limited award from the bursary fund; students must meet the eligibility criteria and submit evidence to enable us to establish their financial needs. The bursary cannot be used to cover counselling, learning support, mentoring, extra-tutoring, living costs or extra-curricular activities.

All applications should be received by the Sixth Form Office by the date specified in the letter and students will be informed of the result as soon as possible after that date. If a student's circumstances change, they can apply for the Bursary Fund later in the year after the completion of an application form. A small amount of money will be reserved in the fund for this eventuality.

Payments

For students who fall into the Group 1 'vulnerable' category and are entitled to up to £1,200 per year, once each student's financial needs are assessed. Students will be required to state what they intend to spend the money on linked to their education and provide receipts before subsequent payments are released into the student's bank account. Generally, we make payments at three points in the year: end of September, February and April.

For students in Groups 2 or 3, who qualify under the discretionary eligibility criteria, the amount they receive will be determined each year by the number of students who qualify for the remaining funds and dependent on each student's financial needs. The Head of Sixth Form will write to each student to inform them how much money they are entitled to. There will be two payments paid into the student's bank account, by the end of September and at the end of February, after Report 2.

Please note that students will need to apply to the Bursary Fund at the beginning of Year 12 and again at the beginning of Year 13. We cannot guarantee that students will be eligible for the same amount each year.

Also, payments depend on very good attendance of at least 90% as well as strong school reports, with at least an Attitude to Learning score of 3 in each subject. This will be closely monitored. Payments can be withheld if students are not fulfilling these requirements.

Receipts

Where possible, bursary payments are made in-kind, for example, with the school ordering textbooks for a student's subjects or with school allocated print credits. In accordance with government regulations, students must submit receipts for any other school-approved items, which they have bought with their Bursary allocation. For bus travel to school, a small sample of bus tickets should be provided initially; we will use the student's home address and their attendance record for the year to verify the additional costs, so not all tickets need to be collected. We cannot release subsequent payments if receipts/bus ticket samples are not submitted to the Finance Office.

Appeals

Students are entitled to appeal against decisions made in relation to their application for a bursary or the withholding of payments. They should first raise their concerns with the Head of Sixth Form, and if this fails to resolve issues, they should make a written complaint to the Headteacher. If this fails to resolve the matter, students can take their appeals to the School's Governing Body. A copy of the school's complaints procedure is available from the Head of Sixth Form.

Fraud

Fraudulent claims for bursary allocations will be referred to the Police. Students found to be making fraudulent claims will be required to refund all payments received and may be asked to leave the school.

Updated during June 2023 from the ESFA's 16-19 Bursary Fund Guide for 2023/24, which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2023-to-2024-academic-year/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2023-to-2024-academic-year>

Useful bursary checklist:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1145246/16_to_19_Bursary_checklist.pdf

Appendix 1 – Letter introducing the 16-19 Bursary

7th September 2023

Dear Sixth Form Parents/Carers

16-19 Bursary Fund Application

We hope you will consider applying to the 16-19 Bursary Fund, if your family are eligible. The government provides the 16-19 Bursary Scheme to help support Sixth Form students from vulnerable groups and lower income families with the essential costs of post 16 education. The aim of the bursary fund is to enable students to participate in post 16 education and overcome financial barriers which might limit participation. The government has given the school a limited amount of money for this purpose.

The government has defined 'vulnerable' students as: 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; receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit (UC) in their own right. Students in this group are entitled to a bursary of up to £1,200 depending on each individual's financial need.

Students are also eligible for a smaller discretionary bursary if their gross household income is up to either £16,190 or £24,000 from the remaining fund to help with any costs towards their education, for example, travel to school, the buying of extra books or subject specific equipment. Until we know how many students are in these further categories and each student's financial need, we are unable to calculate how much financial support each student will receive.

A full explanation of the school's 16-19 Bursary Policy for 2023-2024 is available at:

<https://www.waddesdonschool.com/sixth-form/16-19-bursary-fund/>

If you think your son/daughter is eligible, please complete the attached application form carefully and return it in a sealed envelope to Mrs Long in the Sixth Form Office by Monday 18th September. It is important you attach the required evidence of eligibility/household income. Please be reassured that all applications will be treated sensitively and confidentially. If you would like a paper copy of this letter and the application form for completion, please ask the student to see Mrs Long in the Sixth Form Office.

The government has asked us to stress that we must assess each student's eligibility as noted above as well as their financial needs; if a student does not meet the eligibility criteria or there is no discernible financial need, the student cannot access the Bursary Fund.

Where possible as directed by the government, the school will make in-kind payments from the Bursary Fund, for example, providing textbooks and print credits. If a Bursary contribution is being made towards travel, please attach an initial sample of bus tickets or petrol receipts to the application form. We will then use your address and the student's attendance record to confirm continued use for this academic year.

Once we are aware of the number of students who qualify, I will write to those concerned to explain how much money will be available to each student and how the school processes the payments.

If you have any queries about the 16-19 Bursary Scheme, please do not hesitate to contact me at school. As a school, we do our best to provide as much financial support as we can within the regulations.

Yours sincerely
Ms McIver
Head of Sixth Form

APPENDIX 2: Waddesdon CE School: 16-19 Bursary Fund Application

Please complete the following form to register your son/daughter's eligibility for the 16-19 Bursary Fund. Please note that the fund is limited. Information relating to applications will be treated confidentially. Applications must be submitted in a sealed envelope to the Sixth Form Office by the deadline specified on the letter.

Student details

Surname/family name	
Student's first name(s)	
Date of birth and age on 31 st August 2023	
Address and postcode	
Nationality	
How many years have you been ordinarily & legally resident in the UK?	
What subjects are you taking in Sixth Form?	

To receive payments, you (**the student**) must have a bank account in your own name that will accept BACS payments. If you don't have one, you need to open one before completing this form.

Name of Account Holder	
Name of Bank	
Branch	
Sort Code	
Account Number	
Roll Number	

STEP 1: Please indicate into which of the three groups you fall:

GROUP 1: STUDENT FROM A VULNERABLE GROUP

I am eligible to apply for the 16-19 Bursary Fund as I am a student in a 'vulnerable group'. I am: (please tick)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	A young person who is in care
<input type="checkbox"/>	A care leaver
<input type="checkbox"/>	Receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit because I am financially supporting myself or financially supporting myself and someone who is dependent on me and living with me such as a child or partner
<input type="checkbox"/>	Receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in my own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right
I live in a household with a gross annual income of: (please tick)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Up to £16,190
<input type="checkbox"/>	Up to £24,000
I am attaching the following evidence (e.g. an official Social Services letter and /or 3 months of Universal Credit Award Notices) to support my application:	

GROUP 2: STUDENT WITH A GROSS HOUSEHOLD ANNUAL INCOME OF UP TO £16,190

I wish to apply to the 16-19 Bursary Fund. I am eligible because I: (please tick)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Live in a household with a gross annual income of up to £16,190
I am attaching the following evidence (e.g. Inland Revenue Tax Award letter or last 3 months of Universal Credit Award Notices) to support my application:	

GROUP 3: STUDENT WITH A GROSS HOUSEHOLD ANNUAL INCOME OF UP TO £24,000

I wish to apply to the 16-19 Bursary Fund. I am eligible because I: (please tick)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Live in a household with a gross annual income of up to £24,000
I am attaching the following evidence (e.g. Inland Revenue Tax Award letter or last 3 months of Universal Credit Award Notices) to support my application:	

STEP 2: Please indicate your financial need. Tick the relevant box(es). **The more details you provide, the better assessment we can make about your financial needs.**

- ☐ Tick that you have attached an initial sample of bus tickets/photocopy of bus pass or petrol receipts.

YES/ NO (Tick)	TRANSPORT	
	Distance travelled to school	Miles:
	Mode of transport	
	Costs	Daily return bus ticket: Bus pass: weekly/termly/annual

IF YOU TICK YES BY EACH SUBJECT, WE WILL ORDER YOU THE DEPT RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS	TEXTBOOKS	
	YES / NO	Subject 1:
	YES / NO	Subject 2:
	YES / NO	Subject 3:

YES/ NO (tick)	OTHER ESSENTIAL COSTS E.G. PRINT CREDITS FOR ART/GRAPHICS/PHOTOGRAPHY, INGREDIENTS FOR FOOD SCIENCE...
	Please give details:

Please note that you have to apply to the 16-19 Bursary Fund at the beginning of each academic year and you cannot be guaranteed the same bursary amount each year. Good attendance (90%+) and a positive Attitude to Learning (at least a score of 3 per subject) are also essential requirements to receive the bursary.

Evidence/bus tickets/receipts must be kept and submitted for all services/items bought for our auditors; please submit these to the Finance Office in an envelope with the student's name on the front. We cannot release follow up instalments of the bursary, if this evidence of financial need is not up to date.

Declaration: I declare that the statements made on this form are true to the best of my knowledge. I undertake to inform the school in writing of any changes to my financial circumstances.

Signed (student):		Date:	
Signed (parent/carer):		Date:	

For internal purposes:

Date received in school:	ESFA Checklist attached & checked	Signed:



16 to 19 Bursary Fund checklist

You should use this checklist when assessing student applications for support from the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

Eligibility: All Bursaries

- ☐ Student meets the age criteria.
- ☐ Eligible education provision.
- ☐ Student meets the residency criteria for post-16 provision.
- ☐ Evidence of eligibility has been retained.

Bursary for defined vulnerable groups

- ☐ Student falls within one of the defined vulnerable groups for example, in receipt of the specified benefits in their own right or in care/care leaver.
- ☐ Financial needs assessment carried out to confirm actual financial need and amount of support required. **No student should automatically receive £1,200.**
- ☐ Appropriate evidence seen and copies retained to confirm student's eligibility, including the letter to support in care.
- ☐ Support awarded in kind (bus pass, meal vouchers, books or equipment purchased on student's behalf). Receipts should be retained.
- ☐ Award letter issued to student confirming the amount of support, what support will be made in-kind and payment conditions.

Discretionary bursary

- ☐ Evidence to confirm the student meets the institution's bursary fund criteria, including household income and statement of actual participation costs.
- ☐ Evidence of income and overall eligibility obtained, and copies retained.
- ☐ Assessment of student's actual financial needs carried out. **Block, blanket or flat rate payments are not permitted – the bursary award should reflect the actual costs the student has.**
- ☐ Support awarded in kind (bus pass, meal vouchers, books or equipment purchased on student's behalf). Receipts should be retained.
- ☐ Award letter issued to student confirming the amount of support, what support will be made in-kind and payment conditions.

Final Decision and Reason(s): (family to be advised by letter)

Signed:

Date: