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Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School



BRGS 16-19 Bursary Policy

BRGS 16-19 BURSARY POLICY

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is support made available by the Government to help those young people who may be facing financial constraints or difficulties in meeting the cost of accessing or continuing in post 16 further education.

In allocating the Bursary Fund, we will prioritise the most vulnerable students but will endeavour to support as many students as we can to participate in further education.

Recipients of a bursary award are expected to use this support to help cover the costs of attending the Sixth Form. The anticipated costs include travel expenses, meals and course-related costs, such as equipment, books and school trips.

Please note that the applicant is the student/young person and not the parent/carer.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to receive a bursary you must be aged under 19 on 31 August in the academic year in which you start your programme of study and you must satisfy ESFA residency criteria.

All students applying for a bursary will need to have their own bank account.

To continue to receive a bursary throughout the academic year:

- Your level of attendance must be 90% or above, and
- You must not have broken the terms of the Sixth Form Learning Agreement.

There are three levels of bursary payment:

LEVEL ONE - GUARANTEED BURSARY AWARD

The 16-19 Bursary Fund guarantees a bursary of £1,200 for students who are deemed to be the most in need of financial support and who fall into one of the following categories:

- Young people who are looked after by the local authority,
- Young people who are care leavers,
- Young people who receive Income Support or Universal Credit in place of Income Support in their own right, or
- Disabled young people who are in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right.

If you wish to apply for a guaranteed bursary award, you will need to provide appropriate evidence for submission to the Student Bursary Support Service.

Whilst means-tested benefits paid to families are not affected by Bursary Fund receipts, certain benefits can no longer be received if the student receives Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payments, Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit. You may wish to contact Lancashire County Council's Welfare Rights Service on 0300 123 6739 if you have any concerns.

LEVEL TWO – DISCRETIONARY BURSARY AWARD

Funds permitting, the school will also make level two discretionary bursary awards. To be eligible for a level two award, you must be eligible for or in receipt of Free School Meals. An application does not guarantee an award due to the school having a limited amount of funding.

If you wish to apply for this award, you will need to provide appropriate evidence.

LEVEL THREE – DISCRETIONARY BURSARY AWARD

In the event of the school having funds remaining once all level one and two awards have been made, level three applications will be considered.

Students in the categories below are able to make an application for a level three award:

- Students whose parents/carers are in receipt of means-tested benefits,
- Students with a specific financial need who do not fall into one of the other categories. The financial need may include support for educational trips, expenses to attend college/university interviews, course related clothing, travel to school, equipment or books. Support received may be 'in kind' rather than an actual payment being made, or
- Students who have already received a bursary award but require further financial support.

Whilst all students can make an application for a bursary award under this category, priority will be given to those who have not previously received an award or are most in need of financial support.

Where possible, a contingency fund will be kept to allow for applications arising from changes in students' circumstances during the year.

APPLICATION PROCESS

If you wish to apply for a 16-19 bursary award, you will need to do the following:

- Check that you meet the eligibility criteria outlined and complete an application form accordingly,
- Attach the required evidence as indicated below and on the application form, and
- Submit your completed and signed form to the Sixth Form Office as soon as possible.

Evidence Requirements

The school is responsible for verifying your eligibility for a bursary award and therefore you are required to provide supporting evidence with your application form. Please indicate on your application if you would like this evidence returning to you.

Level One - Guaranteed Bursary Award

Please provide the following evidence, for submission to the Student Bursary Support Service, if you are applying for a guaranteed bursary award:

- A letter from DWP setting out the benefit(s) to which you are claiming. These benefits are noted on page 1.
- Written confirmation of your current or previous looked-after status from the local authority or your leaving care service. This could be a letter or an email.

Level Two - Discretionary Bursary Award

Please provide the following evidence if you are applying for a level two award:

- A letter from the local authority confirming your eligibility for Free School Meals.

Level Three - Discretionary Bursary Award

Please provide the following evidence if you are applying for a level three award:

- Tax Credit Award Notice,
- Entitlement/Award letter from DWP or Job Centre Plus showing evidence of benefits received,
- Family P60,
- Self-employment income evidence, or
- Other means-tested certification.

If you are experiencing exceptional circumstances or are unsure whether you are eligible to submit an application, please contact the Sixth Form Office to discuss this.

CONDITIONS

Any student in receipt of a bursary award will be expected to maintain satisfactory attendance throughout the year, in all subjects. A minimum attendance of 90% is expected, with no unauthorised absences during the school day. In addition, all students are expected to behave appropriately at all times, within the school and when representing the school externally, and demonstrate commitment to their course, as per the Sixth Form Learning Agreement. If a student receiving a bursary award does not adhere to these requirements, the school may discontinue any future payments.

Any young person in receipt of a bursary award who leaves the school before completing their course is required to repay any unspent bursary award and, where applicable, return any course equipment, books etc. so these can be used by other students in the future.

Should any student in receipt of a bursary award experience a change in circumstances which would lead to them no longer being eligible for an award, they must disclose this to the Sixth Form Office as soon as possible.

The application form requires all applicants to agree to these conditions.

DECISIONS

As the Bursary Fund is a limited resource within the school, all applications will be reviewed and prioritised according to the three categories set out above. All applications must be submitted on the application form accompanying this policy and returned to the Sixth Form Office. No other application will be considered.

All applications will be reviewed and considered by the Director of Sixth Form and the Bursary Panel. Any applications which cannot be agreed will be referred to the Head Teacher for a final decision. Students and their parents/carers should understand that the available fund is limited. You will be notified of the outcome of your application by email to the email address supplied on the application form.

PAYMENTS

The method and frequency of bursary award payments will vary depending on which award category you have applied for. The school will take account of your needs wherever possible. You are required to have your own bank account as payments will be made by BACS payment. Payments will not be made in cash, however payments in kind will be made where appropriate e.g. where the school purchases the required item/equipment on your behalf. If you are likely to experience an issue resulting from the suggested payment profiles, please contact the Sixth Form Office to discuss this.

Level One - Guaranteed Bursary Award

Payment of a guaranteed bursary award will normally be made termly, in three equal instalments.

Level Two - Discretionary Bursary Award

Payment of a level two bursary award will normally be made termly as follows: 40% in the Autumn term, 30% in the Spring term and 30% in the Summer term.

Level Three - Discretionary Bursary Award

Payments of a level three bursary award will normally be made termly, in three equal instalments. Payments that are for one off costs, e.g. course related trips, will be made as required, at any time of the year. Where support is made 'in kind', the school will pay for these items directly rather than making an actual payment to the applicant.

FRAUDULENT CLAIMS

Where an application is found to have been made on the basis of false information, payment of the bursary award will be discontinued. The individual concerned may be subject to disciplinary action. The school may seek to recover any funds or goods obtained through the Bursary Fund. It may also result in a referral to the police, with the possibility of prosecution.

APPEALS PROCEDURE

If you feel that you have not been fairly treated in line with ESFA Guidelines, you have a right of appeal. This is subject to the following principles:

- As a matter of natural justice, we will tell you why your payment has been stopped. This will be a simple statement (e.g. "you missed your psychology lesson on Tuesday afternoon"). We will not repeat the general information, which you have already been given in this document, nor will we explain in detail why an absence has been deemed to be unauthorised. Remember, absences are always unauthorised, and the burden of proof that they should be authorised lies with you.
- Your appeal must be made in writing to the Head Teacher. You can request the opportunity to present your case personally, if you wish or you may have an advisor present at the hearing, who may state the case on your behalf. Legal representation is considered wholly inappropriate. We are obliged to provide only one hearing; an appeal decision is final.
- There is no mechanism for appeal to any party outside of the school.

IF YOU NEED ANY FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE BURSARY SCHEME, PLEASE ASK A MEMBER OF THE SIXTH FORM MANAGEMENT TEAM

Or, visit the website: www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund