

Devizes School
16-19 BURSARY FUND
Policy and Procedure for Academic Year 2021/22

C13

Objectives

- To support vulnerable students in Key Stage 5.
- To help students overcome specific barriers to participation so that they remain in education.

Guidance

There are 2 types of 16-19 bursaries:

- bursaries for defined vulnerable groups of up to £1200 a year, and
- discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment.

Institutions must assess the needs of individual students and must not make flat rate payments. Payments cannot be made without considering individual needs.

To be eligible to receive a bursary in the 2021 to 2022 academic year a student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2021 and must satisfy residency criteria set out in the EFA Funding Guidance.

Students must meet the residency criteria in ESFA funding regulations (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-funding-regulations-for-post-16-provision>) for post-16 provision.

The EFA guidance should be consulted in relation to students over 19, under 16, accompanied asylum seeking children and unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

Bursary awards should be targeted towards young people facing financial barriers to participation, such as the costs of transport, meals, books, equipment, field trips and other course related costs. Applications for funding can also be made for industrial placements/work experience, university interviews and open days.

Receipt of a bursary should be conditional on the student meeting agreed standards set by the school, for example, relating to attendance and/or standards of behaviour.

Any provider administering a bursary scheme may use up to 5% of their total allocation to meet administration costs.

Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups

Students who meet one of the 4 criteria below (plus the other criteria for age and residency) and who have a financial need can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups of up to £1,200 per year.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- 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 or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right.

Institutions must obtain proof that students are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups and retain that evidence for audit purposes.

Institutions must submit a funding claim to the Student Bursary Support Service for bursaries for vulnerable groups when they have seen and verified appropriate evidence to confirm student is eligible.

See EFSA guidance for further information.

Discretionary bursaries

Institutions must ensure that their bursary policy is designed to ensure funding reaches those students who are most in need of financial support. Institutions should use household income to help establish the amount of support they award to a student. This can be used in conjunction with other factors, such as distance to travel from the institution, the number of dependent children in the household or whether the young person has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help, for example, they are a young carer or a parent.

School Policy

The school has a small fund available to help support students from low income backgrounds with their post-16 education with discretionary bursaries. Bursaries are for one year only. The ESFA encourages institutions to pay bursaries in-kind rather than cash where possible. In-kind payments can include travel passes, vouchers, credits for meals, books, equipment and cost contribution towards participation in 6th form activities, trips, events. Payments to students will be by BACS transfer to the student's own bank account.

Students will be informed at the time of purchase whether books and equipment need to be returned to the school at the end of the course.

Principles for distributing discretionary bursaries

- 5% of funding to be retained for administration
- discretionary bursaries are awarded to meet individual needs, for example help with the cost of transport, meals, books, equipment, field trips and other course related costs. Applications for funding can also be made for industrial placements/work experience, university interviews and open days.

- priority is given to supporting pupils from low income families however students from families with higher income will be supported at the discretion of the Principal where there is a financial barrier to participation.

Procedure

All bursaries must be applied for annually even if the student has been previously in receipt of a bursary. The application form is available on the school website. Any discussion or applications will be confidential. Students should complete an application form and hand it in with relevant evidence as soon as possible after admission in September. **The closing date for applications will be Friday 24th September, unless a student joins the school later in the Academic Year.** A student in receipt of any level of bursary must inform the Sixth Form Administrator of any changes in family circumstances that may affect support during the academic year. Students who become eligible during the academic year should contact the Sixth Form Administrator and make an application.

Bursary for vulnerable groups (£1200 per annum)

Funding for these bursaries is claimed from the EFA by the school on demand basis only. Applicants should speak to Head of Sixth Form if they believe they are eligible. Payments will be authorised by the Finance Department and made by BACS to the individual.

Bursary Discretionary Grant

Students need to complete and submit the initial application form with required evidence to identify eligibility. Any discussion or applications will be confidential. Students are encouraged to do this as early as possible in September to ensure maximum support, however applications should be made during the year should circumstances change or need arise.

Eligible students will be required to meet with the Sixth Form Administrator to discuss their need for financial assistance which will identify what books and equipment the student needs and whether assistance is needed towards transport and meals. The student will be informed whether the school will purchase travel passes, books and equipment directly from suppliers or whether students need to make the purchase and provide receipts for reimbursement.

The level of financial assistance will depend on individual need.

Bursary support is dependent on 90% attendance and any payments will be authorised by the Finance Department and made by BACS to the individual.

The impact of receiving a bursary on household benefits

Bursary fund payments do not affect entitlement to DWP income-related benefits. Bursary fund payments are made directly to students therefore do not affect means-tested benefits paid to families, such as Income support, Job seeker's allowance, Child benefits, Working tax credit and Housing benefit.

However students getting DLA or Personal Independence Payments and ESA or UC, parents can no longer receive certain household/family benefits for that child.

False information

Students and their families should be aware that giving false or incomplete information may result in future payments being stopped and any incorrect funds being recovered. This might result in a referral to the police and the possibility of the student and/or their family facing prosecution.

Complaints

Any complaints should be pursued through the Complaints Procedure which is located on the school webpage under school policies and procedures.

Contact Us

The Sixth Form Administrator is happy to help and guide students through the Sixth Form 16-19 Bursary Fund Application and Payment Procedure, if you have any questions or concerns please do get in touch. Any discussion or applications will be confidential. Sam Dunbar - sdunbar@devizes.wilts.sch.uk or telephone the school on 01380 724886.