

# **Neale-Wade Academy Sixth Form**

## **16-19 Bursary Fund Policy 2025 - 2026**



An Active Learning Trust School

## Introduction

16-19 Bursary Funds are paid by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to schools and colleges so that they may provide financial help to students whose access to, or completion of education might be inhibited by financial consideration.

They may typically be used for:

- Transport
- Books and equipment
- Additional course costs, including trips & visits
- Costs of travel to HE interviews
- Exam fees (including re-sits)
- BioMedical Admissions Test, University Clinical Aptitude Test or Law National Admissions Test entry fees
- UCAS application fees
- Academy meals

## Policy Aims

- To ensure that the 16-19 Bursary Fund is administered in accordance with DfE/ESFA guidelines and policies.
- To explain the roles and responsibilities of staff and students.
- To explain the procedure for making applications.
- To explain the appeals procedure.
- To describe the eligibility criteria payment processes.

## Responsibilities

### Students

- Students making applications undertake to provide accurate information and appropriate documentary evidence where needed.
- Students must inform the school of changes in their financial circumstances as soon as they occur.
- Minimum of 95% attendance including all lessons and study periods.

### Sixth Form Administrator – Mrs Ayres

- Provides advice and guidance to students on bursary entitlement.
- Assists students in completing application forms, ensuring that the appropriate documentary evidence is attached.
- Logs all bursary applications and submits completed application forms to the Bursary Fund Manager.
- Oversees termly reviews on specified dates to ensure conditions are being met and notifies students and Bursary Fund Manager accordingly.

**Bursary Fund Manager – Mrs Paul**

- Oversees the administration of the fund.
- Makes decisions on applications, in conjunction with the Business Manager.
- Ensures that reasons for Panel's (see below) decisions are accurately recorded.
- Acts as the first point of contact to receive any appeals.
- Liaises with Finance to ensure timely payment of Bursary funds.
- Liaises with Finance to ensure that audit requirements are met.
- Ensures that the fund is publicised in an appropriate manner.

**Bursary Fund Panel**

- This will consist of the Bursary Fund Manager (Mrs Paul) and the Business Manager (Mrs Graham).
- The panel will consider each application and ensure that awards are granted fairly and equitably in accordance with the fund guidelines.

**The Appeals Panel**

- Consists of Mrs Paul involved in the original decision plus the Principal, Mr Horn.

**Finance**

- Ensures funds are paid to students in accordance with the decisions of the panel.
- Administers the cash-flow in accordance with audit and ESFA requirements.
- Liaises with Bursary Fund Manager to ensure that audit requirements are met.

**Governing Body**

- Receives report from Bursary Fund Manager – detailing the take-up against the criteria used and a financial analysis of the expenditure.

## Bursary Application Procedure

Before making an application, students must arrange to see the Sixth Form Administrator, Mrs Ayres, who will guide them through the application process, give advice on the sort of expenses which can be claimed for and explain the documentary evidence required.

Applications are logged by the Sixth Form Administrator before forwarding to the Bursary Fund Manager. **Note: a date for submission is set at the beginning of the academic year so that claims can be considered together. However, new applications can be submitted at any point throughout the academic year.**

The bursary Fund Manager organises a meeting of the Bursary Fund Panel. The panel will consider each claim and make a decision in accordance with the fund guidelines.

Application forms are then sent to Finance who will confirm with the Sixth Form Administrator that the student is meeting the attendance condition before releasing the appropriate payment to each student. In cases where the payment is made to a third party e.g. transport, it will be the responsibility of Finance team to ensure that this occurs. Finance will retain all application forms on file for 6 years.

### Appeals Procedure

Students who consider that their claim has been inappropriately assessed should appeal, in writing, to the Bursary Fund Manager within 4 weeks of the Panel decision, stating clearly their grounds for appeal.

If required, the Bursary Fund Manager will arrange a meeting of the Appeal Panel. The claim will be reassessed, and the student informed of the decision in writing within 10 days of the Panel meeting.

### Criteria and Eligibility for Payment

All applicants must satisfy the following key Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) criteria:

- They must have a legal right to be resident in the UK.
- There is every reasonable likelihood that they will be able to complete their course.
- The course they are attending must be eligible for ESFA funding.
- They are over 16 years of age and under 19 (at 31 August prior to the start of an academic year of study).

Students must also satisfy the criteria set by the school e.g. income thresholds – see below.

Each school is allocated a fixed sum of money for the 16-19 Bursary Fund. 20% contingency is held back in the first instance for applications received during the course of the year or for **Emergency payments** (i.e. after “Window 1” application deadline).

The remaining 80% is then prioritised and allocated as follows:

## **Vulnerable Bursary Students**

These students will receive up to £1200 for the year based on enrolling on a Full Time (ESFA funded) course and meeting the student conditions.

- Young people in care.
- Young people leaving care.
- Young people personally in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit.
- Disabled young people in receipt of Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit and who are **also** in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments.

## **Discretionary Bursary Students**

- Aged under 19 at the start of the academic year for studying at the college in September.
- Be eligible for Free School Meals.
- A family income of less than £34,494 (evidence will need to be provided).
- Students affected by exceptional circumstances.

## **Timings of Payments**

- Students are only eligible for payment if they are legitimately enrolled and attending as defined by the criteria.
- Applications for 2025/2026 Bursary Funds may be made in the time period below:

### **Window 1**

- For a response by, Friday 17 October, applications should be received by Friday 26 September 2025.

### **Window 2**

- Applications received after the Window 1 deadline but before Friday 17 October 2025 will receive a response after October half term.

Beyond Window 2, applications will receive a response within 10 working days of submission.

It is expected that at least 80% of the funds for the year will be allocated by November.

## **How the funding is allocated?**

All decisions about how much bursary is received is dependent on each student's individual circumstances and actual financial need. This will vary from student to student and is dependent on courses studied.

## **How will you pay me?**

- Textbooks and revision guides will be ordered via Mrs Ayres and the Finance Department. If you would like to return these textbooks after your A level examinations, as long as we are offering the same specification then we will buy these back off you at a set price. Please speak to Mrs Paul or Mrs Ayres for further information.
- Stationery can be purchased by the school, which will be provided for students to use. If a voucher is issued, receipts must be provided.
- Laptops can be rented from sixth form for the duration of your courses. You will then have the choice to either return it in a good condition or pay a final payment to have full ownership.
- Transport - Bus costs are covered, and the student is reimbursed after providing proof of purchase. Fuel costs are paid if students live in the surrounding area. A set weekly amount agreed with the student is paid into their account every half term.

## **Emergency Payments**

This aspect is designed to support students who find themselves in sudden and exceptional circumstances of hardship which either threatens their continued attendance or academic success. Funds can only be granted if circumstances of hardship have recently changed and the need for funds is immediate in order to address a crisis situation.

All emergency payments will be made at the discretion of the Bursary Fund Manager and subject to the availability of funds.

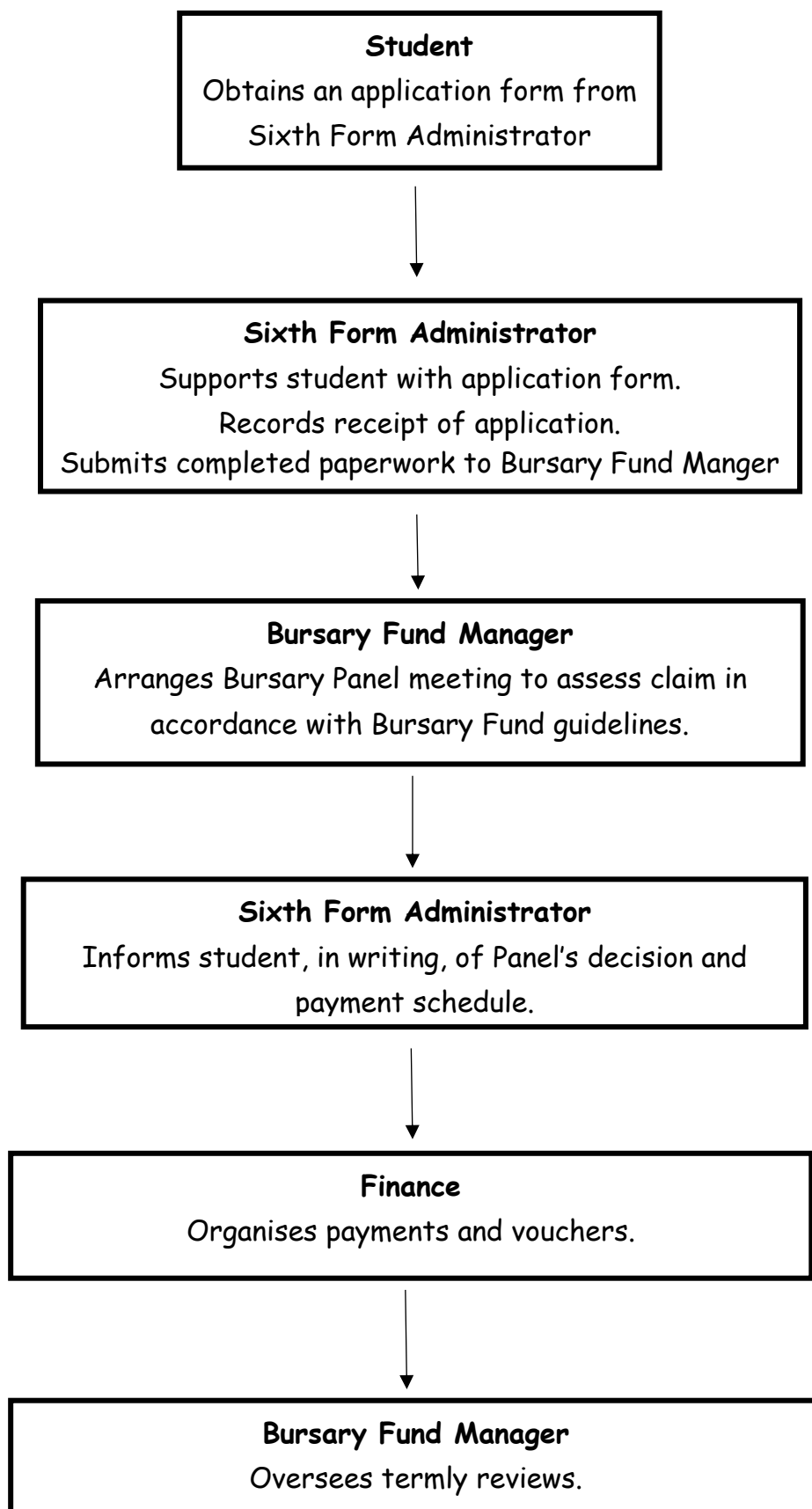
## **Procedure for Applying**

Pupils seeking assistance under this category must do so in person via an appointment with the Bursary Fund Manager. This will take the form of an informal meeting during which the member of staff will complete an Emergency Payment Form. The applicant will be asked to sign this form at the end of the interview so that it can be treated as an application for emergency assistance.

## **Policy Review**

The school's Bursary Fund Policy will be reviewed annually by the Bursary Fund Manager, in accordance with recommendations from the school's audit and guidance from the Business Manager and ESFA requirements.

## Bursary Fund Application Process



## Appeals Process

