



Poole High School

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16 – 19 Bursary Fund Policy

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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

2. Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on the:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2022-to-2023-academic-year>

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). Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 defines the term 'looked after child'

'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 of 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 the 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, monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the Director of Finance.

4.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3 Staff

Our staff are responsible for implementing the 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 Director of Finance of any concerns or queries regarding the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy.

5. How we use the bursary fund

Support from the 16 to 19 bursary fund is available to eligible students.

See section 6 below for details of our eligibility criteria.

The fund is intended to support students aged 16 to 19 in overcoming specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

Whilst applications are being processed, you may need to make some school related purchases before you know the outcome of your application. It is important to **retain all receipts/proof of purchase as you will need to submit these to the Sixth Form office if your application is successful.**

Qualifying students are paid directly into their bank accounts by BACs, with their allocated fund for the year being split into six equal payments to be paid half termly. For example, if a student is awarded a fund for the academic year of £600, they will receive six payments of £100 across the year, one per half term. The first payment may be delayed until after the first half term due to the application deadline being in October and then allowing time for applications to be processed.

Students are restricted in what they may spend the bursary money on:

- Transport – costs associated with travelling to and from school
- Specialist clothing required for a course, e.g. PE clothing, including football boots, under armour, PE top, shorts, trousers, socks, PE bag
- Text books, revision books, flash cards, or other materials/equipment needed for courses
- Field trips, educational visits and other course-related costs
- The costs of attending university interviews and open days
- Exam entry fees (if applicable)
- School bag, so long as it is appropriate for school (strong, durable and suitable in appearance)

This is not an exhaustive list and the Sixth Form will consider any costs that are a barrier to studying.

Students are paid via BACs so it is the students' responsibility to provide receipts to the Sixth Form to show how they have spent the funds.

The bursary fund is not intended to support costs not related to education, extra-curricular activities or provide learning support - services that institutions give to students – such as counselling, mentoring or extra tutoring.

Resources that can be recycled or used again will be expected to be returned (in a good condition) to the school for future use by other students.

Use of a school laptop can be provided for those students that qualify for the bursary – students/parents must complete a 'Student Laptop Scheme Agreement' form, available from the Sixth Form office. **The bursary fund can not be used to fund the purchase of a personal laptop or computer for students.**

6. Eligibility criteria

6.1 Age

To be eligible:

- A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2023

Students 19 or over must either:

- Be continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18, or
- Have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

6.2 Eligible education provision

Students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assure quality (e.g. Ofsted). The provision must also be either:

- Funded directly by ESFA or by ESFA via a local authority
- Funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund
- Publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) accredited by Ofqual or on the ESFA list of qualifications approved for funding 14 to 19
- In a 16 to 19 traineeship programme
- Non-employed and participating in a Prince's Trust Team Programme

Students are not eligible if:

- They are on an apprenticeship programme
- Are on any waged training

Students who are studying via distance learning may need infrequent financial help (e.g. travel to exams), if this is the case we will provide support in-kind (e.g. a travel pass)

6.3 Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in the [ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision](#).

6.4 Asylum seekers

Those under 18 with an adult relative or partner and those aged 18 and above:

- Are entitled to education
- Are not entitled to public funds
- Can apply to the Home Office for suitable housing and cash for essentials

We will provide in-kind support such as books, equipment and a travel pass to asylum seekers who have not had asylum refused.

Unaccompanied children:

- Are the responsibility of the local authority
- Are to be treated as 'looked after' children
- Are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups

When these students reach 18 we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary if the asylum claim is in their favour and will be treated as a 'care leaver' until they reach the upper age limit.

6.5 Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups

Students who meet one of the following four criteria below, in addition to the above age and residency criteria, 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 (those who are privately fostered are **not** classed as looked after)
- 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

We look at individual cases for these students, and will award an amount based on their financial needs following a financial needs assessment. Students will only receive the amount they need to participate and will not automatically receive £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

Students eligible for bursaries under this category will be given a pro rata bursary if their study programme lasts for less than 30 weeks.

We will obtain the following **proof of eligibility** for vulnerable groups (original documents must be seen, which will be returned to students as soon as a copy has been taken, copies are stored securely on school premises and destroyed once retention period has been met):

- 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. The evidence could be a letter or an email but must be clearly from the local authority
- For students in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit, a copy of their Income Support or Universal Credit 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 Universal Credit (UC), a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificates, utility bills etc.
- For students receiving UC/Employment and Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments, a copy of their UC claim from DWP (UC claimants should be able to print off details of their award from their online account). Evidence of receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment, must also be provided

6.6 Discretionary bursaries

We strongly encourage students that were Pupil Premium in main school or have been or are currently in receipt of free school meals to apply for the discretionary bursary.

Bursaries are to be awarded at the discretion of the school, based upon the individual needs of a student to participate in their studies. All awards are to be based upon evidence of household income. Bursary allocations are used for items that are needed to access learning, or costs incurred by attending Sixth Form. Evidence of these costs must be provided (e.g. receipts), unless the cost is a charge made by the school.

In assessing an application for a discretionary bursary, we will consider:

- Level of household income – discretionary bursaries will generally be awarded to students who are dependent on adult(s) with a total household annual income of no more than Evidence of an annual income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) that does not exceed £20,000 (dated within three months) inclusive of benefits (Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payments are not included as part of the household income)
- Distance to travel between the student's home and the institution – evidence must be provided to show travel costs, e.g. recent bus ticket/pass or train ticket, etc.
- The number of dependent children in the household (under 18 and in full time education or preschool). The average household has 2.4 children, therefore our standard discretionary bursary qualifying threshold of £20,000 applies to families with up to two children. In instances where there are more than two children in a household, the household income may be above this threshold, and the school will be able to make a discretionary decision taking into consideration average figures from Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) regarding the cost of raising children and teenagers
- Whether the student has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help

To assess household income, the school need to see documents dated within the last three months and they must show evidence of the current household income (original documents must be seen, which will be returned to students as soon as a copy has been taken, copies are stored securely on school premises and destroyed once retention period has been met):

- Bank statements (most recent three months for all adults contributing to the household)
- Universal Credit award notices (most recent three months statements)
- Proof of benefits letters, e.g. Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Employment & Support Allowance dated within the last three months
- Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit Award notification dated within the last three months
- P60 dated within the last three months
- Pay slips (most recent three months for all adults contributing to the household)
- Statement showing Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Evidence of an annual income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) that does not exceed £20,000 (dated within three months)
- Statement for Support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Evidence documents must be dated within three months of your application. If the document predates this, it will still be acceptable if accompanied by the most recent three months bank statements for adults in the household showing receipt of the benefits, clearly showing that payments have not changed.

7. Payment

7.1 What amount of bursary will be awarded

The amount of money that has been assigned to Poole High by Department for Education has already been agreed.

The level of funding available to each student will vary as it will be decided by sharing the funds available by the level of need established by the evidence provided by parents/guardians. The funds will be reviewed every half term to take into account any leavers, new applications or changes to need and cannot be guaranteed.

If there is not enough funding to cover all of the needs that have been applied for, a proportion of this will be awarded.

Support is subject to funds being available at the time your application is received and assessed. This is a limited fund and once exhausted no further funding will be available. You should, therefore, be aware that a financial reimbursement for your expenditure is not guaranteed. All awards made are subject to the school receiving sufficient funds from the DfE.

7.2 Process

- Parents and students will review this policy and the application form, if they decide they meet the eligibility criteria for either type of bursary, they should make an application (see section 9), including the relevant evidence as detailed in this policy.
- Once the deadline for applications has been met in October, the bursary team will assess the completed applications and will award a bursary to eligible students and the amount awarded will be dependent on the level of need specified on the application form.
- Parents/students will receive a letter to advise them if they are eligible, ineligible or in some cases will receive a letter to advise that we could not process the application due to insufficient evidence. Those that are eligible will be advised how much they have been awarded and how they will receive payments.
- A form will be enclosed for eligible students to collect back the students' own bank details which will be used for payments, this should be completed and returned to the Sixth Form office as soon as possible.
- Students will receive their fund paid to their own bank account in six equal payments spread across the year.
- Parents/guardians/students must keep us updated as to any changes in bank details.
- Parents/students must keep us updated as to any change in circumstances which may affect their need for a bursary

Eligible students need to have their own bank account set up in readiness to receive payments. Failure to do this in advance will result in delays to payments.

In some cases, 'in kind' payments may be more suitable; for example, resources, clothing, etc., that the school is able to buy in bulk and provide at a lower cost.

7.3 Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments

Support is conditional on students meeting the following conditions in relation to their standards of attendance and behaviour:

- ✓ Good attendance
- ✓ Punctuality to registration at 8.25am and all scheduled lessons (i.e. no LATES reported on the electronic registration system)
- ✓ Good attitude to study and learning
- ✓ Good attitude to other members of the community and behaviour around the school site (including travelling to and from the school site)
- ✓ Following the Sixth Form Code of Conduct

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 Bursary support withheld, reduced or withdrawn.

We will consider the impact on attendance that might be caused by illness, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances.

We will stop Bursary support where students have been absent for a period of 4 continuous weeks or more (excluding school holidays, or if there is evidence that the student intends to return).

As much as possible, we will avoid sanctioning a student to the extent that their bursary funding would be stopped for a whole term.

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.

7.4 Student absences

If a student's accumulative attendance or attendance for that bursary period drops below 95% then this will be taken into consideration when their payment is calculated and their payments may be reduced accordingly.

Students must follow our guidelines for reporting absences as per below, if these processes are not adhered to, this may result in queries and disrupt bursary payments:

For a short period of ill health, a parent or guardian must call into school/email on the first and each subsequent day of an absence (01202 662001); email to sixthform@poolehigh.poole.sch.uk

For a period that is known about in advance, (e.g. planned specialist medical appointments, university visits, driving test, etc) should be notified by completing a 'Request For Absence' form available from Sixth Form reception and returning it to Sixth Form in advance of the occasion.

Through an extended period of ill health, it will be assessed whether the student still requires the bursary for the period of their absence due to illness as it is provided to support the costs of study.

For a holiday during term time, bursary will be withdrawn for the period of the holiday. An assessment will be made regarding future payments as holiday during term time is not in line with the Sixth Form Code of Conduct.

8. Appeals

Appeals about any decision must be made in writing to the Director of Finance. Appeals must be made in writing within five working days of decisions being issued.

You will be informed, in writing, of the decision. If you are not satisfied with the decision made about your first appeal, please address a further appeal in writing to Mrs S Phillips, Deputy Headteacher of Poole High School. This second appeal decision will be final and no further appeals will be accepted.

9. How to apply

Applications should ideally be submitted by the end of the second week in October to ensure enough time to assess the overall level of demands and make discretionary awards on a fair basis. This date will be clearly stated on the application form. However, as students' circumstances may change, applications will remain open for the whole school year.

Application Check List:

- Bursary Application form, available from Sixth Form office and on school website, to be completed and returned with any relevant receipts as evidence.
- For vulnerable bursaries include the proof of eligibility as detailed in section 6.5.
- For discretionary bursaries enclose original documents as proof of income as specified in section 6.6 (dated within 3 months of your application). *Or*, enclose 3 months bank statements for adults in household showing benefits/income being received (if your proof document is older than 3 months).

Applications can be returned in person to the Sixth Form office or by post to:

Bursary Scheme
Poole High Sixth Form
Wimborne Road
Poole
BH15 2BW

Our application process is set out to maintain complete confidentiality for students, parents and carers.