

**16-19 Bursary Fund Policy 2020/2021**

**Section 1: Introduction**

Waseley Hills High School (WHHS) receives an annual allocation of 16-19 Bursary Funds from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) to assist young people who face the greatest barriers to continuing in education or training post 16. If you are aged between 16 and 19 years old and think you might struggle with the costs for full-time education or training you may receive a bursary.

WHHS operates the scheme in compliance with the EFA '16-19 Bursary Fund – Guide for 2020/2021 and this policy sets out our approach to the use of the Bursary Fund in 2020/2021.

This policy will be reviewed annually in July.

**Section 2: Student Eligibility**

The 16-19 Bursary has two elements:

* Students in the **‘vulnerable group’** as defined by the EFA (i.e. young people in care, young care leavers, young people in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit; and young people in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance (or the new Universal Independence Payments) who are also in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments) will be eligible to receive a **Guaranteed Bursary Award** of £1,200 per year.

* **Discretionary Bursary Awards** that best fit the needs and circumstances of our students. Bursary awards will be targeted towards students facing financial barriers to participation and achievement, such as the costs of transport, meals, books or equipment etc.

To be eligible to receive a 16-19 Bursary in the 2020/2021 academic year you must be:

* Aged 16 or over and under 19 on 31 August 2020
* Resident in the EU for 3 years or more
* Enrolled on A2 courses
* On a means-tested benefit, or dependant on parents on a means-tested benefit (we will use eligibility for Free School Meals in the first instance), in financial hardship or in the 'vulnerable group' as defined by the EFA above.

**Section 3 : Application and Assessment Procedure**

Please use the WHHS 16-19 Bursary Fund Application Form.

If you are applying for the **Vulnerable Bursary Award** you must be able to provide evidence that demonstrates you meet the eligibility criteria set out above to receive an award up to £1,200 p.a.

If you are applying for a **Discretionary Bursary Award** you must be able to provide evidence that demonstrates you or your parents/carers are in receipt of a means- tested benefit and/or that you are in financial hardship. We will use our discretion to make awards to students in ways that best fit their needs and circumstances

Priority for these discretionary awards will be given in the first instance to those students eligible for **Free School Meals**. An application form is attached which must be submitted to Children’s Services in Worcester. You and the school will be informed as to whether your application has been accepted. All eligible students are encouraged to apply for FSM as soon as possible.

You can expect to know the outcome of the assessment of your application within two weeks of submitting your completed application form. You will receive written confirmation of the outcome.

**Please note**: the Bursary Fund is a finite amount of money and will be distributed according to need in the fairest way possible. The value of any Discretionary Awards will depend on the total demand on the Fund. A portion of the Fund will be retained for contingency i.e. claims later in the year.

**Section 4: Payments**

**Vulnerable Bursary Award**s

Funding for students in the defined vulnerable groups is held centrally and the school will apply for the funding on your behalf. The maximum amount awarded is £1,200 but for courses lasting less than 30 weeks or part-time courses this will be pro-rated according.

Payments will be made on a termly basis.

**Discretionary Bursary Awards**:

The value and frequency of the award will be at the school’s discretion and will be dependent upon numbers of applications made. Priority for these discretionary awards will be given in the first instance to those students eligible for **Free School Meals** but other exceptional circumstances will be considered.

A significant portion of the total fund will also be awarded on a discretionary basis to **any** individual student in genuine financial hardship for specific benefits-in-kind.

FSM students will have a claim on remaining funds on a discretionary basis and for benefits-in-kind only (not cash). Such benefits might include subsidy of bus passes, resit fees, UCAS fees, train tickets to open days, equipment for studies, clothing, trips etc. The funds can be used to pay for the benefit directly or to reimburse an expenditure supported by a receipt.

**Payment of any Bursary will be conditional on you maintaining high standards of attendance, achievement and punctuality.**

To receive bursary payments you must normally have a bank account in your own name that will accept BACS payments (it is not possible to make BACS payments into a post office account). If you do not have a bank account, you will need to apply to open one. If there is a delay in setting up a bank account that will result in further financial hardship please discuss with Finance Office about whether it is possible to make interim payments.

Books, reference materials and non-consumable equipment funded by the Bursary remain the property of WHHS and must be returned to the school at the end of the course, or before if you leave early.

Payment of a Discretionary Bursary is subject to the availability of funds and any Bursary awarded to support you whilst you are on a course does not guarantee support for any subsequent courses.

You will be required to repay any overpayments resulting from early withdrawal from a course.

**Section 6: Records and Data Protection**

Staff involved in administering the 16-19 Bursary will comply with Waseley Hills High School’s policy on the storage and transfer of information supplied in the course of application and payment of funds.

**Section 7: Fraudulent Claims**

 We must protect public funds from the possibility of fraudulent claims. We may ask for detailed

 information and may invite applicants for interview so we can distribute funds fairly. If your

 claim is considered fraudulent during our spot checks or auditing processes we will request that

 the money awarded to you is repaid in full. If you fail to repay your award, we may take court

 action.

**Section 8: Appeals and Complaints**

If your application is unsuccessful you have the right to appeal against the decision; you may also appeal about the amount or type of award by writing to the Headteacher. Your letter should clearly state why you feel the award should be reconsidered. You may be invited to provide additional information or invited to discuss your individual circumstances as part of your appeal.