



Dorset Education Partnership
FERNDOWN UPPER SCHOOL

The 16-19 Bursary Fund Policy

Policy first adopted : July 2011

Reviewed : Sept 2014.....

Reviewed : May 2021.....

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Reviewed ...March 2026.....

The 16-19 Bursary Fund

Purpose

The purpose of the 16–19 Bursary Fund is to provide financial support to students who face barriers to participation in education due to financial hardship. The fund is intended to support students with the essential costs associated with attending sixth form.

The school administers the bursary fund in accordance with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) guidance.

Eligibility

Students in the following three groups may be eligible for support provided they meet the general conditions set out by the government* which are summarised below.

Group 1

Students who are identified by the government as 'most vulnerable'. After assessment showing there is an actual financial need a bursary up to a maximum of £1,200 per year may be awarded. Students in this group are

- in care*
- care leavers*
- receiving Income Support (IS), or Universal Credit (UC) in their own right
- receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right

*The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund defines 'in care' 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'.

A 'care leaver' is defined as:

1. 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
 2. a young person aged 18 or above who was looked after prior to becoming 18 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
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Discretionary Bursary

Students who are not in the vulnerable group may be eligible for discretionary bursaries if they face financial barriers to participation.

The school will prioritise students who:

- receive Free School Meals
- are from low-income households
- have significant travel costs
- require essential equipment

Group 3

Students who come from families in the lower 40% of UK household incomes.

- Students with an annual family income of less than £20,000 in the last tax year (including benefits). This must be established through current Working Tax Credit / Child Tax Credit Documentation.
- Students who can demonstrate through Working Tax Credit / Family Tax Credit that their award has been changed to reflect a change in circumstances so that their annual family income including benefits is now below £20,000.

In addition the following criteria must be met for a student to be eligible:

- Students must be aged 16 and under 19 on 31st August in the academic year in which they start their programme of study.
 - Students aged 19 or over are eligible for discretionary bursaries if they are continuing on a programme of study they began aged 16 to 18 or they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). They are not eligible for bursaries for vulnerable groups.
 - Students must satisfy the residency criteria set out in the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).
 - The student must be on a full-time programme of study. Students on study programmes of less than 30 weeks and applying for the bursary for vulnerable groups, should be paid a pro-rata amount.
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- Students receiving payments under the transitional EMA support arrangements may be eligible for the 16-19 Bursary in addition to the EMA, but payment will be pro-rated accordingly.

Assessment and evidence of entitlement

The eligibility of the student for the bursary is assessed using appropriate evidence that is provided to school via an electronic form. Acceptable evidence required is specified on the application form and could include:

- Information about household income
- Postcode of student's home
- Distance the student lives from school
- The number of dependents living at the same address
- Receipt of Free School Meals

Information must be accurate at the time of application.

The school reserves the right to request additional evidence.

Payment of bursaries

It is expected that bursaries should be used to help students with the costs related to participation in education. For example, books and equipment, meals whilst attending courses and the cost of educational visits related to courses/trips. We will deduct the cost of any transport provided by the school to the student, where this has not already been paid for.

A small proportion of the bursary allocation may be used to cover the administration of the scheme where permitted by ESFA guidance.

Bursary funds can be spent in-kind where a request is made and the school will purchase the item. This can help with reducing the item price to the student. The cost will then be deducted from the individual bursary award.

Accessing allocated funds

Students may request release of funds from their individual bursary pot by making an application using the on-line form. Payment will be considered for all requests deemed to be related to their 6th form education such as:

- Books
- Laptops
- Equipment
- Trips
- Course resources
- Placement expenses

This list is not exhaustive and all requests with an educational link will be considered.

All bursary payments will be authorised by the School Business Manager or delegated finance officer.

Conditions of payment

Payment is conditional on good attendance including punctuality and a good attitude to study.

Continued receipt of bursary support may be dependent upon satisfactory attendance, punctuality, behaviour and engagement with the study programme.

- all absences must be properly notified and authorised by calling into the school office on each day of an absence;
- known absences (e.g. medical appointments, University visits etc.) should be notified by completing a 'request for authorised absence' slip and returning it to the Sixth form office before the date of the event;
- students should be punctual to registration and lessons and there should be no 'lates' reported on SIMS;
- holidays during term time and prolonged medical absences will cause reductions to the pot as the bursary is awarded to support participation in education;
- behaviour and effort in lessons are also conditions of payment and negative feedback from teaching staff will result in bursary payments being declined.

Decisions / Appeals

Decisions about acceptability of evidence for eligibility and assessment of need will fall into the below stages.

Stage 1 – Sixth Form Team review

Stage 2 – Senior Leadership Team review

Stage 3 – Governor panel

Appeals must be made in writing within 10 working days of decisions being issued.

The decision of the Appeal panel will be final and communicated in writing to the student.

Fraud and Misuse of funds

If a student is found to have provided false information or misused bursary funds:

- payments may be withdrawn
- funds may be reclaimed
- disciplinary procedures may apply

Add Data Protection Statement

All personal data collected for the purposes of administering the bursary will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
