



## **16-19 Bursary Fund Policy 2018-2019**

This Policy document sets out the arrangements for how Writhlington School will prioritise and administer the 16-19 Bursary Fund in 2018-2019.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is designed to help support young people who face the greatest financial barriers to participate in education or training. It is our aim to use funds to make the maximum impact on attendance, retention, achievement and success rates.

### **Who is eligible to apply?**

To be eligible to apply for the fund, students must:

- be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2018 or
- be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2018 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2018 and continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18, these are referred to as '19+ continuers' (they are excluded from funding under the high priority group)
- Have been a resident in the UK or EEA for three years preceding 31 August 2017 (verified before enrolment) or are registered as an unaccompanied asylum seeking child
- Meet the stated criteria.

The fund is split into 2 parts:

### **A. Guaranteed Bursary**

A **guaranteed** Bursary is available to all learners who fall into one of the vulnerable groups identified below and are eligible to receive £1,200 a year. This is paid termly subject to meeting attendance and behaviour criteria:

- be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2018
- in care including unaccompanied asylum seeking children
- leaving care
- in receipt of Income Support\* or the equivalent Universal Credit (UC) in their own right

*\* Income support is paid to young people such as teenage parents, young people with severe disabilities, teenagers living away from their parents, young people whose parents have died and unaccompanied asylum seeking children, where a financial need is established.*

- in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right
- Young people in receipt of Universal Credit payment in their own name
- Young people who are disabled and receive Employment Support Allowance and a Personal Independence Payment in their own name.

## **B. Discretionary Bursary**

The school will then award bursaries to students who face genuine financial barriers to participate in education to help with costs such as transport, meals, books and equipment.

The level of support which the school can offer is dependent on the total funding received from the EFA (Education Funding Agency) and the numbers of applications it receives. **We are unable to let students know how much they will receive until the application deadline has passed and applications have been assessed.**

The school will award a bursary for spending on agreed items and this money will be released on the production of a relevant receipt. The school may also provide items, the value of which will be deducted from the bursary amount (for example a laptop or recommended texts which the school can purchase in bulk).

There are 2 priority groups for the discretionary bursary:

### **Priority 1: Students eligible for Free School Meals**

Parents of young people do not have to pay for school lunches if they receive any of the following:

- Income Support
- Universal credit
- Income-based Job Seekers' Allowance
- Employment Support Allowance (income related)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guarantee element of State Pension Credits
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) that does not exceed £16,190.

Parents in receipt of Working Tax Credit do not qualify for free school meals.

Appropriate evidence confirming eligibility will be required.

Students do not need to be taking free school meals to qualify but need to be registered for free school meals.

## **Priority 2: Student is not eligible for Free School Meals but has a family income of less than £25,521**

Appropriate evidence confirming eligibility will be required:

Benefits received:

- Income Support or Income-based Employment and Support Allowance – most recent benefit letter from HM Revenue & Customs detailing the amount of benefit received.
- Universal Credit - the last 3 award notices detailing income.
- Tax credits – Tax Credit Award notification from HM Revenue & Customs for the Tax Year 6 April 2017 – 5 April 2018 detailing the household income and your Tax Credit entitlement.
- DWP benefits – a statement of paid benefits from Jobcentre Plus or your social security office.

Or evidence of employment:

- Salaries and wages – P60, month 12 or week 53 payslip; and P9d or P11d if you have received benefits or payments in kind; and P45 if you had more than one employer in the tax year 2017-2018.
- Self-Employment Income – your SA302 form; or Tax Credit award notification; or accountants letter on headed paper.

### **Application process**

- Complete the 16-19 Bursary Fund application form answering all questions to avoid any delays in processing – forms can be downloaded from the school's website.
- Attach the required proof (please send in photocopies and not the originals).
- Hand in application to Sixth Form Administrator.

### **Evidence**

All applications to access the 16-19 Bursary Fund must be supported by appropriate evidence as detailed on the application form.

### **What happens next?**

- The Bursary Panel will test the application against the eligibility criteria and check the evidence and assess the need for funding.
- The school will notify students in writing of the outcome of their application within 14 working days of the application deadline.
- Students awarded a guaranteed bursary will receive payments each term.
- Students awarded discretionary bursary will be informed of the amount and will draw this down as per need and on production of relevant receipts/evidence.

Please note: Students will need to have a current bank account.

## **Appeals**

There is a right of appeal. If any young person or their parent/carer is not satisfied with the outcome of their application, they should appeal in writing to the Deputy Head of Sixth within 10 working days stating fully their reasons why. The Deputy Head of Sixth will call a Bursary Appeals Panel within 15 working days of receiving the appeal. The applicant will be informed of the panel's decision within 10 working days of that meeting. The panel's decision is final.

## **Important Notes:**

The fund will be distributed in a consistent and fair way and in accordance with guidance issued by the Education Funding Agency (EFA). Where possible and appropriate, awards will be calculated using a formula. This process will be overseen by the Business and Finance Director.

Where, in the view of the Deputy Head of Sixth Form, special circumstances apply, the application will be assessed by the Bursary Awards Committee. The Committee can make non-standard awards where appropriate.

In cases where emergency help is required, support may be arranged by the Committee to reflect the immediate needs of the student.

The budget for the Bursary Fund is limited: students who are eligible for support are not automatically entitled to it. If demand exceeds the available funds reduced awards may be given.

In its administration of the Bursary Fund, Dragonfly Sixth will not discriminate against students on any basis as defined in current equalities legislation.

Awards only last for one academic year. Students enrolled on a two year course will need to re-apply for financial assistance at the beginning of the second year. Awards made in the second year may differ from first year awards.

All awards are dependent on the student achieving and maintaining satisfactory progress and attendance in all their classes and will be stopped if deemed unsatisfactory.

## **Exceptional Circumstances**

Any student regardless of household income may be considered for Bursary or emergency payments if they are experiencing financial difficulty due to a significant and unexpected change in personal circumstances during their time at school.

The school will operate a contingency fund which will be used for one-off payments to help students who are experiencing exceptionally challenging circumstances, attend school trips, interviews etc.

Students may apply for Bursary support anytime during the year if their circumstances change.

## **Conditions of Bursary**

Payments will be subject to satisfactory attendance, punctuality, behaviour and progress in line with the school's policies. A student awarded a Guaranteed or Discretionary Bursary will sign an agreement with Writhlington School undertaking to meet the school's conditions.

### **Discretionary Bursary Panel**

Caroline Taggart (Deputy Head of Sixth)

Mark Bridges (Assistant Head)

Chris Hobbs (Business and Finance Director)

Their responsibilities are:

- To agree and confirm the criteria and formula for making standard awards
- To agree discretionary awards on an individual basis
- To formulate the school policy and procedure for distributing the Bursary Award Fund

### **Discretionary Bursary Appeals Panel**

Mark Everett (Headteacher)

Clare England (Deputy Headteacher)

Nick Russon (Deputy Headteacher)

This Panel is responsible for hearing any appeals and to rule on the appropriateness of the original award decision, confirming or amending it as appropriate.