



Dorset Education Partnership  
**FERNDOWN UPPER SCHOOL**

# The 16-19 Bursary Fund Policy

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# The 16-19 Bursary Fund

## Purpose

To distribute the funds allocated by the government in the fairest possible method that takes into account the household income of students and the extra costs they incur by undertaking Sixth Form Study. There are two types of bursary: “defined vulnerable groups” and “discretionary bursaries”. All bursaries are awarded based on assessment of financial need. It is possible that a limited bursary or no bursary may be allocated.

## 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 of actual financial need a bursary up to a maximum of £1,200 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

## Group 2

Students who are eligible for free school meals. You are eligible if your parents are claiming one of these benefits.

- Income Support
- Income based job seeker's allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

## 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 EFSA funding regulations.

- 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.
- 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. 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.

## **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.

At the start of the year a 5% administration charge will be set aside from the bursary fund. The remaining funds will be allocated to all eligible students according to need.

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 6<sup>th</sup> 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.

## **Conditions of payment**

Payment is conditional on good attendance including punctuality and a good attitude to study. Reductions to the student's pot will be made for poor attendance, poor attitude to study etc. In addition,

- 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 rest with the Bursary team.

Appeal from any decision would fall to a panel of a senior member of the teaching staff and a governor. Appeals must be made in writing within five working days of decisions being issued.

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