

# Featherstone High School

## 16-19 Bursary Fund Policy



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**Non Statutory Policy**

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## 1.0 Introduction

### Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of the 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
- Make clear to parents and students the attendance and behaviour conditions for receiving the funds.

### Guidance

- This policy is based on advice from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) [on the 16-19 bursary fund for the 2022 to 2023 academic year](#). This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.
- The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education and benefit from post-16 education and training.

### 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)
- 'Looked after child' is defined as: a child in the care of a local authority or who is provided with accommodation by the authority in the exercise of any functions for more than 24 hours (section 22 of the Children Act 1989)
- '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 amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16.

## 2.0 Roles and responsibilities

### The governing board

The governing board has overall responsibility for approving this 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, responsibility for approving this policy has been delegated to:

- Director of Sixth Form
- Associate Director of Sixth Form
- Sixth Form Administrator

This panel will review applications, supporting evidence and any other personal circumstantial evidence given. Students will be notified of the outcome within two weeks of receipt.

### **The Headteacher**

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

### **Staff**

Our staff are responsible for implementing this 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.

### **Parents**

Parents are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy.

## **3.0 How we use the bursary fund**

Financial support is available to eligible students from the 16 to 19 bursary fund. See section 4 below for details of our eligibility criteria.

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

We use the fund to provide students with support to fund:

### **There are two types of 16-19 bursaries:**

- Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups
- Discretionary bursaries which the school awards using policies set in line with the ESFA funding rules.

### **Bursary funds can typically be used for the following:**

- Transport
- Books and Equipment
- Uniform
- General Hardship
- Trips that are an essential part of the curriculum.

## **4.0 Eligibility criteria for the 16 to 19 bursaries**

### **Age**

To be eligible for either bursary in the 2022 to 2023 academic year, students must be at least 16 years old but under 19 years old on 31 August 2022.

Students aged 19 or over are eligible only for a discretionary bursary if they:

- Are continuing on a study programme or course which they began when they were aged 16 to 18 years old, or

- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for defined vulnerable groups.

In exceptional circumstances, where students under 16 years old are on a funded 16 to 19 study programme at our school, we may use our discretion to pay bursaries to these younger students. However, if these students are enrolled at another institution that receives public funding for them, they will not be eligible for bursary funding.

### **Eligible education provision**

Students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (e.g. Ofsted). The provision must also fall into one of these groups:

- Be funded directly by the ESFA or by the ESFA via a local authority;
- Be funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund;
- Be otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual or is on the ESFA's list of qualifications approved for funding 14 to 19; or
- Be a 16 to 19 traineeship programme
- Non-employed students aged 16 to 19 who are participating in a Prince's Trust Team Programme are also eligible to receive a bursary in the same way as any other student participating in an eligible, publicly funded course.

### **Students are not eligible if:**

- They are on an apprenticeship programme; or
- Are on any waged training
- Students who are studying via distance learning are eligible for either 16 to 19 bursary but are likely to require financial help on a more infrequent basis (e.g. travel to exams). If this is the case, we will provide support in-kind, such as a travel pass, details of which shall be decided on a case-by-case basis.

### **Residency**

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

### **Asylum seekers**

Accompanied asylum seekers under 18 with an adult relative or partner and asylum seekers aged 18 and above are entitled to education but are not entitled to public funds. If necessary, they 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 asylum-seeking children:

- Are the responsibility of the local authority;
- Are to be treated as 'looked after' children; and
- Are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups, where they have a financial need
- When these students reach 18 years old, we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary as a student from a defined vulnerable group if the asylum claim is in their favour and will be treated as a 'care leaver' until they reach the upper age limit.

### **Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups**

Students with a financial need, who meet one of the following 4 criteria below, in addition to the criteria outlined in section 4, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups.

#### **The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:**

- In care (NB: those who are privately fostered are not classed as looked after);
- Care leavers;

Receiving Income Support (IS) or Universal Credit (UC) 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; or

Receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIPs) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right.

UC has now replaced IS, as well as other benefits above, for current and future young people aged 16 to 18. However, students aged 19 to 25 and funded from the 16 to 19 budget (19+ continuers and students with an EHC plan) may still receive the legacy benefits listed above.

Students who meet the criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups are not automatically entitled to a bursary. Students will not receive the bursary if they do not have any actual financial need (for example, because their financial needs are met from other sources and/or because they have no relevant costs).

Where a bursary is provided, the funds will generally be **up to** £1,200 per year for study programmes lasting 30 weeks or more. When calculating the amount, **cases will be looked at individually** and the outcome based on a particular student's needs. Students **will only receive the amount they actually need** to participate and will not automatically receive £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

We will review the student's eligibility position each academic year. Students will only continue to receive a bursary for vulnerable groups if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

We will provide this support for students from the bursary fund by making payments in kind where possible. It will not be provided as regular payments for living costs.

#### **The following groups of young people are eligible to apply.**

- Group A: Vulnerable young students – Guaranteed Bursary
- Group B: Students who are eligible for Free School Meals
- Group C: Students facing Financial Hardship – based on receipted expenditure.

There are 3 separate bursaries that students could qualify for:

#### **Vulnerable Bursary (Level One)**

You could receive up to £1,200 if you are:

- In or have recently left local authority care;

- Disabled and you get Income Support in your own name;
- Disabled and you get Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and either Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your name;
- Disabled and you get Universal Credit in your name in place of Income Support or ESA.

### **Discretionary Bursary (Level Two and Three)**

You can apply for a discretionary bursary if you are not eligible to receive the vulnerable bursary, but still need financial help to stay on in school. Featherstone Sixth Form provides **two levels** of discretionary bursary support.

**Level 2** - For students whose gross household income is below **£16,500** as assessed by HMRC. Students whose parents are in receipt of Universal Credit should **also** apply to their Local Council for Free School Meals.

**Level 3** - For students whose gross household income is between **£16,500- £25,000** as assessed by HMRC.

Students will be entitled to receive vouchers that support the costs of continuing in study, such as for clothing, resources and travel. This may also be issued in the form of food vouchers, paid directly into their lunch accounts. Students will also be able to have items required for their course purchased on their behalf, as well as be entitled to a discount on curriculum trips and other related costs.

### **Hardship**

Students who do not satisfy any of the criteria listed in this section, but who are able to demonstrate financial hardship arising from other reasons, are encouraged to apply for a discretionary bursary.

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

- Level of household income
- Distance to travel between the student's home and the institution, or a location for a placement
- The number of dependent children in the student's household
- The requirements of their study programme
- Whether the student has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help.

## **5.0 Evidence**

All applications for 16 to 19 bursaries must be supported by appropriate evidence. Examples of acceptable evidence we may request are:

- A copy of the UC or IS award notice, in the student's name
- Documents such as a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, birth certificate or utility bills
- Written confirmation of the student's current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority
- A copy of the UC claim from the Department of Work and Pensions.

## 6.0 Application, payment and appeals process

### Application

All students who believe they are eligible for a 16-19 Bursary should submit a bursary application form on **Operoo**, by the last **Friday of September**.

**The bursary application process has two stages:**

**Stage 1:** Complete 16-19 Bursary application form on Operoo  
This form should be completed by **the last Friday of September**.

**Stage 2:** Application will be reviewed by the panel and where authorised, vouchers will be issued.

### Payments

Upon successful bursary application, vouchers will be issued to students. The school may also choose to make in-kind payments, such as for travel passes, UCAS payments and netbook deposits. There will be **two payment points** throughout the year; **October Half-term and February Half-term**.

### Appeals

If any student or their parent/guardian/carer(s) are not satisfied with the outcome of their application, they should write to the Director of Sixth Form outlining their reasons why.

The Director of Sixth Form will convene a 16- 19 Bursary Appeals Panel, consisting of:

- Deputy Headteacher
- 1 x SLT member

The panel will then meet, and a decision will be communicated to the complainant within twenty-one days of receipt of the complaint.

## 7.0 Conditions of payment

### Attendance & Punctuality

Whilst strong attendance (above 95%) is not a condition for bursary payments to be awarded, all young people in receipt of the bursary are expected to meet punctuality and attendance requirements, as outlined in the Sixth Form Handbook. These conditions will not be additional to those expected of any young person within the school.

### Bank account & Method of payment

Students will receive payments through vouchers or the school providing resources as requested by the student. Payments to bank accounts will **only** be given if vouchers or resources cannot be provided by the school. Bursary funding requires students to have their own bank or Post Office account as funds are paid directly to them and will not be paid to a third party. Support will stop should a student cease to be learning at the school.



### **Change of young person's financial circumstances**

Any young person in receipt of a Bursary has a duty to inform the school should their financial circumstances, or those of their parent/guardian/carer(s) change (e.g. increase in household income, Free School Meals being withdrawn).

This does not automatically mean any future bursary payments will be stopped but would result in a review to determine whether the payments continue or be stopped, and the funds redistributed.

## **8.0 Monitoring and record-keeping**

### **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed by the Associate Director of Sixth Form annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the bursary panel.

### **Record-keeping**

Any paperwork and documents we retain for audit purposes (for example, copies of application forms, documents as evidence and any agreements signed by students) will be kept securely in line with our data protection policy, privacy notices and record retention schedule.