16 – 19 Bursary Fund - Policy Statement

Purpose of Policy

The 16-19 Bursary Fund exists to help students continue with and complete their course where they would otherwise be prohibited from doing so on financial grounds. The purpose of this policy is to clarify the procedures adopted by Bingley Grammar School for allocating and administering the funding it receives under this arrangement.

Aims

The Bursary Fund is intended to help with the hardship needs of individual students. Its intent is to “enable” a learner to continue with his or her education and should not be viewed as an incentive to attract young people into learning. Generally, awards from the Bursary will be used towards essential course related costs such as books, equipment, travel, field trips, visits and other costs associated with living and learning. Bingley Grammar School will seek to ensure that the funds available are:

- Distributed fairly through a process which is transparent and easily understood. Information about the process for application and consideration is available from the 6th Form Administrator (Mrs Booth) in the 6th Form Office.
- Assessed and allocated to each individual’s entitlement or need, taking into account the financial circumstances of the applicant and the intended use of the award
- Used to widen access to, and participation in, sixth form education.

16-19 Bursary Funding and the guidance concerning the administrative arrangements, priority groups for support and monitoring arrangements is issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). This gives a broad overview of the Fund and instructs schools on the appropriate use of the funding.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund has two elements:

1. Vulnerable Groups

The following students will be eligible to apply for a bursary of up to £1,200 per year, if they have a financial need, and if the school’s agreed standards of behaviour and attendance are met:

- young people who are looked after children in the care of the Local Authority or foster parents
• care leavers
• those young people who receive Income Support, or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent upon them and living with them such as a child or partner
• disabled young people in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right

The amount awarded will depend on the level of support the student needs to participate based on an assessment of the types of cost they have. The number of hours involved in a student’s study programme may also be considered when deciding if a pro-rata payment is more appropriate.

Any students eligible under the vulnerable student categories above will be reported on a claim form to the Student Bursary Support Service (SBSS). The SBSS will then release the appropriate funds to school to provide for these payments. Therefore, the general bursary funding received by the school will only relate to discretionary bursaries.

2. Discretionary Bursaries

*Please note: there is a limited amount of funding which means that it may not be possible to support every discretionary application and priority will be given to those students from the families with the lowest household income and/or highest demonstrated need.*

These awards will be targeted towards young people facing financial barriers to participation in sixth form studies. Agreed standards of behaviour and attendance should be met.

Students must meet the eligibility criteria detailed in the DFE 16-19 Bursary Fund Guidance.

Students from the Vulnerable Groups may also apply for additional assistance from the Discretionary Bursary Fund. However, receipt of Vulnerable Group funding will be taken into consideration in assessing any further awards.

**Application Process**

**Step 1:** Completed financial assessment forms should be returned to the Sixth Form office for confirmation of eligibility. **Note:** Any student entitled to Free School Meals
as shown on the authorised Free School Meal register received from Bradford Council will initially be deemed to be eligible for consideration for a discretionary bursary. However, if the level of application for support exceeds the funding available to us we may need to request the completion of a financial assessment form in order to make the application of support as equitable as possible.

Once confirmation of financial eligibility is received,

**Step 2**: Application forms for the Bursary Fund should be completed and returned to the Sixth Form office. All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

**Step 3**: Applicants will be advised in writing as to the outcome of their applications

- Students with successful applications in either the Vulnerable Groups or Discretionary Bursaries categories will either have the books, equipment, travel or other costs provided by the school or direct payment will be made to the applicant subject to the assessment of need in enabling the student to continue with their studies, and subject to the limitations of the funding.

- Unsuccessful applicants will have the right of appeal

**Awards Process**

Discretionary bursary awards are made for specified course related costs and/or other costs viewed as presenting a barrier to the individual learner’s participation in education. The amount of each award will be assessed and disbursed on an individual, case by case basis as detailed in the individual’s application form.

If a student is assessed as being eligible for a discretionary award the school may provide this as a periodic payment providing the student has given an indication of the appropriate costs on which this will be spent to support their participation in education.

The School may offer discretionary bursaries in the form of non-cash “in kind” payments where appropriate, such as travel vouchers or meal vouchers, attendance on course related school trips etc. Any equipment purchased by the school for use by an individual learner remains the property of the school and must be returned upon completion of or withdrawal from the course.

The school may also offer an award in the form of a short-term loan to help a learner bridge a temporary financial hardship where this is deemed appropriate and agreed by the learner. In this case, the school will draw up an agreement with the learner clearly stating the use of and the conditions surrounding the reimbursement arrangements which the learner should sign indicating that they understand the conditions of the loan. The student should be able to provide evidence that the award has been used as intended. The school will pursue action to recover any non-repayment of loans.
In line with the “something for something” ethos, both forms of Bursary Fund payments are conditional upon a student meeting attendance and behaviour standards which are agreed in advance. Details of the Attendance and Behaviour standards required may be obtained from the 6th Form Administrator (Mrs Booth) in the 6th Form Office and a written copy of the requirements will be provided to all students in receipt of a Bursary payment.

Where the learner does not meet the agreed attendance or behaviour standards, which will be monitored on a weekly basis, the school will advise the learner in writing and make every effort to help resolve any issues, but retains the right to rescind or suspend bursary payment(s).

### Appeals Process

The Headteacher has the delegated responsibility to make all decisions in respect of both the award of 16 – 19 Bursary Fund payments, and any action to rescind or suspend bursary payment(s).

Should learners disagree with the outcome of either their application for a bursary award or where a payment has been withheld due to attendance/behaviour, they must follow the School’s complaints/appeals procedure. A copy of the complaints procedure is available on the school website or from the 6th Form Administrator in the 6th Form Office.

### Reviewing/Monitoring of Policy

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis in line with allocated funding, and taking into account the views of the school, young people and their parents and guidance from the Department for Education and the Education Funding Agency. It will be monitored through the Governing Body.

The policy is also available in the following formats: email, enlarged print version, VLE, other formats by arrangement.

*Originator: JES*
*Partner Governor: GS*
*Ratified by: Full Governing Body*
*Date of Policy: Sept 2020*
*Next Review: Sept 2021*