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| Approved by Governing Body on: | **05/07/2024** |
| Signed by Chair of Governors: |  |
| Head Teacher: | **O M Flowers** |
| Lead Personnel: | **L Goodby** |
| Date of Review: | **05/07/2025** |

1. Aims

**16-19 Bursary Policy**

2024/2025

Building foundations and providing opportunities to create confident,   
aspirational, and independent members of our community.



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Our school aims to:

Have clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of 16 to 19 bursary funds

Make clear to parents/carers and students the type of support that is available and the means of applying for it

Make clear to parents/carers and students the attendance and behaviour conditions for receiving the funds

2. Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on the 16 to 19 bursary fund for the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

3. 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:

o 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

o 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

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 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.

4.2 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.

4.3 Staff

Our staff are responsible for implementing this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy consistently.

The senior leadership team (SLT) will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4 Parents/carers

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

5. How we use the bursary fund

Financial support is available to eligible students from the 16 to 19 bursary fund. See section 6 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.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups; and

Discretionary bursaries

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

Transport

Books

Equipment needed for a student to be able to access the curriculum or to develop their independence in life skills

Educational visits that support the curriculum, residential visits and other course-related costs

6. Eligibility criteria for the 16 to 19 bursaries

6.1 Age

To be eligible for either bursary in the 2023 to 2024 academic year, students must be at least 16 years old but under 19 years old on 31 August 2023.

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

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

Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

6.2 Eligible education provision

The Westminster School is an eligible education provision under the guidance issued by the ESFA. .

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.

6.3 Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in the ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision.

6.4 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.

6.5 Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups

Students with a financial need, who meet 1 of the following 4 criteria below, in addition to the criteria outlined in sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 above, 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 can use our discretion, on a case-by-case basis, and provide more than £1,200 per year if such would be necessary in all the circumstances for the student to remain in education. Any such additional payment will be paid either from our discretionary bursary allocation or our own funds.

If a student’s study programme lasts for less than 30 weeks, they will be paid a pro-rata amount. We will also consider the number of hours involved in a student’s study programme when deciding whether a pro-rata payment is more appropriate.

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.

6.6 Discretionary bursaries

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

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

o Level of household income/receipt of certain benefits

o Whether the student has additional needs that may mean they need extra help or will incur extra costs as a result of that need.

There is no set limit for the amount of discretionary bursary that can be awarded to students. We will base all decisions around which students receive a discretionary bursary, and how much bursary they receive, on each student’s individual circumstances and their actual financial need.

We will review the student’s eligibility position each academic year. Students will only continue to receive a discretionary bursary if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

6.7 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 Department of Work and Pensions

7. Application and payment process

7.1 Process

Payments are made using the following process:

For Discretionary Bursary - Where possible we will pay for services or equipment needed for the student from the schools discretionary bursary allocation received from the local authority.

For Vulnerable Bursary – School make termly payments by BACS transfer to the student’s bank account

7.2 Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments

Payments are conditional on students maintaining regular attendance at The Westminster School. We will consider the impact on attendance that might be caused by illness or other exceptional circumstances.

If you leave the school and do not plan to return your Bursary will stop from the date you leave.

All parents/carers are required to agree to these conditions.

We reserve the right to take back money from students where it is not spent for the reasons it was awarded.

We will consider the impact of such an action on the individual student before taking a final decision to do so.

8. Change in circumstances

If there are changes in circumstances that may affect eligibility for a bursary, applicants and/or parents/carers must notify the school without delay.

9. Record keeping

Any paperwork and documents we retain for audit purposes will be kept securely in line with our data protection policy, privacy notices and record retention schedule.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the governing.