

Grace Academy Coventry

16 – 19 Bursary Fund Policy

Policy Reference:	BUR09
Version:	V3
Status	Operational
Authors	Principal/ School Business Manager/ Head of Sixth Form
Applicable to	Grace Academy Coventry
Checked by	Local Governing Body
Valid From	September 2023
Review Date	September 2024

Contents

1. Aims	2
2. Guidance	2
3. Definitions	2
4. Roles and responsibilities	2
4.1 The governing board	2
4.2 The Principal	2
4.3 Staff	3
4.4 Parents	3
5. How we use the bursary fund	3
6. Eligibility criteria	3
6.1 Age	3
6.2 Eligible education provision	3
6.3 Residency	4
6.4 Asylum seekers	4
6.5 Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups	4
6.6 Discretionary bursaries	5
7. Payment	6
7.1 Process	6
7.2 Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments	6
8. Monitoring arrangements	6

1. Aims

Our Academy aims to:

- Have clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of 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

2. Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on the <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-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). Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 defines the term 'looked after child'

'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 of 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 the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the Principal.

The governing board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

In our Academy, responsibility for approving the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy has been delegated to the Principal.

4.2 The Principal

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

4.3 Staff

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

The Academy Leadership team will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation. The ALT member responsible for 6th Form will manage this process.

4.4 Parents

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

5. How we use the bursary fund

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 barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

We use the fund to provide students with support for:

- Transport
- Books
- Equipment
- Field trips and other course-related costs
- The costs of attending university interviews and open days
- Individual requests for other types of support may be considered

6. Eligibility criteria

6.1 Age

To be eligible:

- A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2024

Students 19 or over must either:

- Be continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18, or
- Have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

6.2 Eligible education provision

Students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assure quality (e.g. Ofsted). The provision must also be either:

- Funded directly by ESFA or by ESFA via a local authority

- Funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund
- Publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) accredited by Ofqual or on the ESFA list of qualifications approved for funding 14 to 19
- In a 16 to 19 traineeship programme
- Non-employed and participating in a Prince's Trust Team Programme

Students are not eligible if:

- They are on an apprenticeship programme
- Are on any waged training

Students who are studying via distance learning may need infrequent financial help (e.g. travel to exams), if this is the case we will provide support in-kind (e.g. a travel pass)

6.3 Residency

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

6.4 Asylum seekers

Those under 18 with an adult relative or partner and those aged 18 and above:

- Are entitled to education
- Are not entitled to public funds
- 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 children:

- Are the responsibility of the local authority
- Are to be treated as 'looked after' children
- Are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups

When these students reach 18 we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary 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 who meet one of the following 4 criteria below, in addition to the above age and residency criteria, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups of up to £1,200 per year.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

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

- Receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit 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
- Receiving 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

We will look at individual cases for these students, based on needs. Students will only receive the amount they actually need to participate and not automatically receive £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

Students eligible for bursaries under this category will be given a pro rata bursary if their study programme lasts for less than 30 weeks.

We will obtain the following **proof of eligibility** for vulnerable groups:

- For students who are in care or a care leaver, written confirmation of their current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority. The evidence could be a letter or an email but must be clearly from the local authority
- For students in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit, a copy of their Income Support or Universal Credit award notice. This must clearly state that the claim is in the student's name/confirm they are entitled to the benefits in their own right. The evidence must not state any conditions that prevent them from participating in further education or training
- For students in receipt of Universal Credit (UC), a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificates, utility bills etc.
- For students receiving UC/Employment and Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments, a copy of their UC claim from DWP (UC claimants should be able to print off details of their award from their online account). Evidence of receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment, must also be provided

6.6 Discretionary bursaries

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

- Level of household income
- Distance to travel between the student's home and the institution
- The number of dependent children in the student's household
- Whether the student has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help
- Students individual/exceptional circumstances

To assess household income, we will ask to see:

- Proof of benefits letters
- Tax credit award notifications
- P60s
- Pay slips

- Bank statements covering a certain period (e.g. the last 3 months)
- Universal Credit award notices (e.g. the most recent 3)

7. Payment

7.1 Process

The Academy will base all decisions about which students receive a discretionary bursary and how much bursary they receive on each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need. These will vary from student to student. The Academy will not make bursary fund payments as regular payments for living costs as this is out of the scope of the bursary fund.

- The academy will use payment in kind wherever possible, for example course material, travel passes and trip costs. Students will need to itemise their requirements, seek approval from the Academy prior to any purchase and provide receipts as evidence.
- Where payments in kind are not possible, the Academy will make use of BACS transfer for payment.

Applications should ideally be submitted by 13th October to make sure enough time is allocated to assess the overall level of demands and make discretionary awards on a fair basis. This date will be clearly stated on the application form. However, as students' circumstances may change, the application process will remain open for the whole school year.

7.2 Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments

Payments are conditional on students meeting the following:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Code of Conduct and Behaviour

All students are required to sign a declaration confirming that they agree to these conditions.

Students who fail to meet these conditions may have their payment withheld.

We will consider the impact on attendance that might be caused by illness, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances.

8. Monitoring arrangements

A senior manager will oversee the operation of the Bursary Fund, and establish clear monitoring of its operations through the Academy management structure.

This policy, and its operation, will be reviewed by the Academy Leadership Team/Governors at the end of the academic year.