

# Brine Leas School



## 16 to 19 Bursary Policy 2023/24

### 1. Aims

Our school 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
- Make clear to parents 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.

This policy complies with our funding agreement.

### 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:
  - 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

- In some instances, a young person may have been in the care of the local authority and the care transferred to another party via a permanent form of fostering such as a Special Guardianship Order. In these circumstances, the young person is defined as having left care so is now a care leaver. They must meet the definition of a 'care leaver' in full (so, the period of weeks and age range set out above). If they do, they are eligible for help from the bursary for vulnerable groups, where they need financial support to participate. A child who is privately fostered (in other words, a private arrangement is made between the parent and the person who will care for the child) is not classed as a looked after child and is not eligible for the bursary for vulnerable groups.

## **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 student's sub-committee has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

In our school, responsibility for implementing this policy has been delegated to the Head of Sixth Form, Business Manager and School Administrator with responsibility for the Sixth Form.

### **4.2 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.

### **4.3 Parents**

Parents 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 the support to fund:

- Transport
- Temporary meal support
- Essential books and/or equipment
- Field trips and other course-related costs
- Trips and visits organized by the Sixth Form to prepare students for the future
- The costs of attending university interviews and open days
- The costs of attending apprenticeship interviews

Please note: books and/or equipment purchased using bursary funds must be returned to Brine Leas School once students have completed their study programme so they can be used again by another student where appropriate.

An assessment of the financial needs of students will be made upon receipt of an application for financial support.

Flat rate/fixed rate payments to students will not be made; and the fund cannot be used to support costs not related to education, extra-curricular activities or provide learning support services such as counselling, mentoring or extra tutoring.

## **6. Eligibility criteria for the 16 to 19 bursaries**

### **6.1 Age**

To be eligible for either bursary in the 202<sup>3</sup> to 202<sup>4</sup> academic year, students must be at least 16 years old but under 19 years old on 31 August 202<sup>3</sup>.

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 can receive a discretionary bursary while they continue to attend education on the course(s) they began before they turned 19, as long as their eligibility continues and Brine Leas School considers they need the support to continue their participation.

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.

### **6.2 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; or

- 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.

### **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 one 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 base 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 it as regular payments for living costs.

## **6.6 Discretionary Bursaries**

In addition to the criteria outlined in sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 above, students can apply for a discretionary bursary if they satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

- Students who are in receipt of Free School Meals. Confirmation will be obtained from the local authority and the student will receive Free School Meals during their studies (£2.45 per day).
- The household's gross annual income, as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs does not exceed £17,005.
- Where the young person's parent/carer(s) are in receipt of one of the following: -
  - Income Support/Universal Credit
  - Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
  - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
  - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. Under no circumstances will any cash payments be made to an asylum seeker who is not an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child (UASC)
  - The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
  - Child Tax Credit
  - Working Tax Credit
  - At the school's discretion, a child who is privately fostered or under a Special Guardianship Order, in other words, a private arrangement is made between the parent and the person who will care for the child.

- A student lives in excess of the recognized (statutory) walking distance of 3 miles from Brine Leas Sixth Form using road distance for bursary towards public transport.

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, may 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 work experience
- 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

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. This will vary from student to student.

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 Applications**

Applications should ideally be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> September to allow enough time for our school to assess the overall level of demand and make discretionary awards on a fair basis. This date will be clearly stated on the application form.

However, we acknowledge that students' circumstances may change and therefore the application process will remain open for the whole school year.

Applicants will be notified in writing (via email) whether their application has been successful.

## **7.2 Payment process**

Vulnerable and Discretionary bursary payments are made in arrears throughout the year by BACS transfer to the student's bank account.

## **7.3 Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments**

Payments of the Vulnerable and Discretionary bursary are conditional on students meeting the following conditions in relation to their standards of attendance and behaviour:

- A qualifying period of 6 weeks has been completed
- Attendance above a certain amount (e.g. 95%) [subject to exceptional circumstances]
- Public transport evidence in the form of weekly/monthly bus tickets or evidence that an annual bus pass has been purchased; it cannot be received by students who use a private car to travel to Sixth Form
- Following your sixth form code of conduct

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, but we will always take students' individual circumstances into consideration. This includes considering the impact on attendance that might be caused by illness, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances.

We will stop payments where students have been absent for a period of 4 continuous weeks or more (excluding holidays) and where students have decided to withdraw from a study programme. Bursary payments made prior to the date of withdrawal will not be recovered but any scheduled payments to be made after the date of withdrawal will not be made.

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, and any decision will be confirmed to the student in writing.

## **8. Appeals**

If any student or their parent/carer(s) are not satisfied with the outcome of their application, they should write to the Headteacher outlining their reasons why. The Headteacher will convene a 16 to 19 Bursary Appeals Panel. In the absence of the Headteacher this role can be delegated to the Deputy Headteacher providing they have no previous involvement in the decision-making process.

The Panel will consider and respond to the appeals within ten working days of receipt. If the appeal is upheld, or partly upheld, it will be referred back to the 16 to 19 Bursary Application Panel with recommendations. If the appeal is not upheld an independent panel will be convened as per the complaints policy.

## 9. Change in circumstances

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

In individual cases of severe hardship, Brine Leas School may be able to provide Food support whilst a student attends their study programme, for students who can be considered to be in real need. This provision is on a one-off basis and can be provided at the schools' discretion without need of additional eligibility checks such as household income or other evidence. For each individual case, Brine Leas School will need to provide a rationale for the food support and retain a record of the monetary value of support given to each individual student, with a signed confirmation provided by the student. If food support assistance is needed, please contact the School Administrator with responsibility for Sixth Form or Business Manager and the matter will be dealt with confidentially.

## 10. 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. The policies can be accessed upon request.

## 11. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Head of Sixth Form and Business Manager at the end of every year. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.

<b>Prepared/updated by:</b> S O'Neill	<b>Date:</b> May 2023
<b>Approved by LGB:</b> June 2023	<b>Review Date:</b> May 2023
<b>Issue:</b> K Bradshaw/S O'Neill	<b>Date of previous version:</b> September 2022

## Workload Impact Assessment

**Name of Policy:** 16 to 19 Bursary Policy 2023/24

This policy has been reviewed in consultation with the staff members it will affect?  
**YES/NO**

This policy has been workload impact assessed YES / **NO**

The impact on workload is HIGH / **MEDIUM** / LOW / ZERO



If you have answered YES, YES and ZERO above then do not complete the rest of this assessment.

Ways in which changes to this policy will increase the workload of staff:

1. Changes to government guidance require a needs assessment to determine the amount of funding received by a student. This will require greater scrutiny.
2. Initial assessment of financial needs will be undertaken by **a member of the Sixth Form Team, Head of Year or Head of Sixth Form**, within the school day.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Actions taken to minimise the impact:

1. The school has identified the resources necessary to support the policy, including staff time, and any additional staffing and appropriate equipment required **YES/NO**
2. All staff, including the Headteacher, have had training to ensure that the policy and any related procedures are carried out without increasing workload burden **YES/NO**
3. The implementation of the policy will not result in any additional meetings or activities that have not already been identified in the school calendar **YES/NO**
- 4.
- 5.

Assessment carried out by: S O'Neill

Date: **June 2023**