



# Saint Cecilias 16 to 19 Bursary Fund Policy 2022-23

The 16-19 Bursary Funds are paid by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to schools so that they can provide financial assistance to students whose access to education might be inhibited by financial barriers.

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund has 2 elements:

Vulnerable Bursary for vulnerable young people: Eligible students will receive a bursary of up to £1,200 per year.

Discretionary Bursary: These awards are targeted towards those young people who face financial barriers to participation in education, such as the costs of transport, meals, educational visits, books, and equipment. The awards are aimed to fit the needs and circumstances of individual students and are at the discretion of the person appointed by the Headteacher to manage the school's bursary funds. The fund is not intended to support extra-curricular activities where these are not essential to the students' study programme.

## Who is eligible to receive the bursary?

### Age

To be eligible to receive a 16 to 19 Bursary in the 2022/23 academic year the student must:

- Be aged 16 or over and under 19 on 31st August 2022; or
- Be aged 19 or over at 31st August 2022 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP); or
- Be aged 19 or over at 31st August 2022 and continuing a study programme they began aged 16 to 18.

The last two groups are only eligible for discretionary bursary.

### Residency

- The student must meet the residency criteria in ESFA 2022/23 funding regulations. See detailed guide: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/funding-rates-and-formula/funding-guidance-for-young-people-2022-to-2023-rates-and-formula>
- Accompanied asylum seeking children - as long as they have not had their application for asylum refused, the student may receive in-kind student support such as books or equipment. Cash will not be paid directly under any circumstance unless they are an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child.
- Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children – If they are an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child, then they will be treated as looked after child and be eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups ('in care' group), where it is identified that they have a financial need.

In addition, they must be eligible in one of the following categories:

### Priority 1 - Vulnerable Bursary

The following students may be eligible for a bursary of up to £1,200:

- They are in, or have recently left, local authority care.
- They are 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 child or partner).
- They are 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.

They may qualify for the full amount, or a part thereof, depending on their individual circumstances. Funding for this bursary is held centrally by the ESFA. Students who qualify for this bursary might experience a short delay while the school applies to draw down the funding. The bursary will be payable in regular instalments.

### **Discretionary Bursary**

The fund allocated to the school is a fixed and finite sum and allocations may therefore not exceed the total sum available. The amounts paid will be subject to the number of students in the categories below and the availability of the funds.

#### **Priority 2**

A proportion of the funds allocated to the school will be distributed amongst the students who face the greatest financial hardship. These students are likely to be those who are eligible for free school meals and whose household income is below £16,190 (per government Free School Meal eligibility criteria).

#### **Priority 3**

Further applications will be considered on an individual basis and where the household income is between £16,190 and £20,595

#### **Priority 4**

Further applications will be considered on an individual basis and where the household income is between £20,595 and £25,000.

#### **Priority 5**

It is intended that the fund could also support students who suffer a change in circumstances causing hardship during the academic year. Students should contact the Director of Sixth Form in the first instance.

The provision of financial support will be monitored by the school and if it is deemed that it is not supporting academic progress than alternative support may be put in place following discussions with parents/carers and student.

### **Other key information**

- If IT/specialist equipment is required, the school will purchase this and the cost deducted from the student's overall award.
- Most discretionary bursary allocation payments will be 'in kind', based on need, which may include but are not limited to:
  - Essential books
  - IT/specialist equipment
  - School trips

- Travel to open days or university interviews
- Any student who is in receipt of Free School Meals will continue to be entitled to Free School Meals under the bursary scheme.
- Reimbursements will be made to students following submission of receipts as proof of purchase, these will be held on file and payments will be made directly to students via BACS transfer.
- Where the school purchases books and equipment for a student, the student is expected to return books and equipment to the school at the end of the study programme so that they may be used again by another student where appropriate.

### **Qualifying conditions**

Bursary fund payments will be subject to meeting the attendance and behaviour requirements of the school:

- Qualifying period – satisfy a qualifying period of study, i.e., at least six weeks.
- Attendance – a minimum of 95% attendance (subject to exceptional circumstances). The Bursary payment will be reduced or even removed if attendance falls below 95%.
- Behaviour – no cause for concern.

### **Application Deadline**

- Vulnerable Bursary – there is no deadline. However, we will be able to help and arrange regular payments if you apply for the funding early in the year.
- Discretionary Bursary – We encourage students to submit their applications at the start of the September term, however the closing date for application is Friday 21st October 2022. The discretionary bursary is a limited sum of money allocated to the school. Once the allocation has been allocated to students, no further applications for support can be considered. All applications will be dealt with on a first-come, first-served basis. We will retain a proportion of the funding as a contingency for students in Priority 5 category above.

### **Application Process**

All students joining or continuing with the Sixth Form at the start of September will be given information about the bursary. Copies of all documentation and the application form can be found on the website and can be collected from the Director of Sixth Form, who can also provide assistance to complete.

A new application form must be submitted each year for consideration. There is no guarantee that funding will be available for future years, even if you are eligible for the current year.

All applications will be kept in the strictest confidence.

### **Supporting Evidence**

The supporting documents needed to verify household income are outlined in the application form.

### **Signed Declaration**

At the end of the application form, students and their parent/carer must sign a declaration. Students and their families should be aware that if false or incomplete information is submitted, the matter may be referred to the Education and Skills Funding Agency and/or the police, with the possibility of

prosecution. The Sixth Form will seek to recover any payments the student is not eligible for. We must be notified in writing of any changes to the information provided, which may affect the eligibility of the bursary. If the student leaves the Sixth Form or fails to abide by the Sixth Form's attendance and behaviour policies, we may ask for the award to be returned or withhold payments.

### **Process following submission**

The application form and supporting documents will be checked. They will be stored securely and will only be used for the purpose of assessing their eligibility for the Bursary Fund. In line with the ESFA guidance, the documentation will be retained for 6 years.

The person appointed by the Headteacher to manage the school's bursary funds will then consider each application.

Details of all successful applications will be passed to the Finance Department, together with level, timing and conditions of the bursary awarded.

### **Right to Appeal**

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your application, you have the right to appeal against the decision. You should follow the school's normal complaints procedure.

### **Further Information**

The terms of this scheme are reviewed on an annual basis. Details can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/funding-rates-and-formula/funding-guidance-for-young-people-2022-to-2023-rates-and-formula>

Please note the information above may be subject to change following guidance from the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

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