

KING EDWARD VI HANDSWORTH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Statement on the use of the 16-19 Bursary Fund - 2023-2024

Aims of the School:

- Ensure that all students have equality of opportunity and provision to ensure that all thrive and succeed.
- Endeavour to mitigate against the social disadvantages experienced from students from less wealthy backgrounds and ensure that all have an opportunity to take part in the full life of the school.

Introduction

- 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 Bursary is intended to help with the financial hardship needs of individual students. Its intent is to “enable” a student to continue with 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.

This 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 Attendance Officer.
- Assessed against each individual’s 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.
- Used to support and encourage aspirations to destinations beyond school by removing the financial barriers to applying to higher education or apprenticeships and aiming to provide equal access to opportunities such as University Open Days

16-19 Bursary Funding and the guidance concerning the administrative arrangements, priority groups for support and monitoring arrangements is issued by the Education Funding Agency (EFA). This gives a broad overview of the Fund on the whole and instructs schools on the appropriate use of the funding. There is a limited amount of funding which means that it will not be possible to support every application and priority will be given to those students from the families with the lowest household income and/or highest demonstrated need.

The school is required by law to assess who is eligible, and if a student applies for funding the family will need to provide evidence to the school of their financial position. Financial assistance is available to those who have a total household income equal to the level at which free school meal/Pupil Premium funding would be received. The bursary is subject to attendance, behaviour and performance which will be monitored throughout the year.

The 16-19 Bursary Funds has two elements:

1. Priority Groups (Defined Vulnerable Groups): The following students will be eligible to receive a bursary of £1,200 per year, if 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 payment in their own name.
 - disabled young people in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment in their own name
2. Bursaries for other Young People: These awards will be targeted towards young people facing financial barriers to participation in sixth form studies.
 - Priority will be given to those young people from the families with a household income equal to or below the level at which free school meals or Pupil Premium funding would be received. This is currently £30,000.
 - All students receiving free school meals or who have siblings who are in receipt of free school meals will automatically be deemed eligible to apply for funding.

- Agreed standards of behaviour, punctuality and attendance should be met.

Students apart from those in the Priority Group may also apply for assistance from the Bursary Fund. However, receipt of Priority Group funding will be taken into consideration in assessing any further awards.

Stage 1: Eligibility Process

Step 1: Initial letters will be sent annually to all students in year 12 and 13 informing them of the bursary and other aspects of financial assistance which may be available. The letter will confirm the process to assess eligibility to financial assistance from the Bursary.

Documentation that can be used to assess eligibility may include:

- P60s, Self-employment accounts, Wage slips, A letter from DWP
- Online statements for Universal Credit – These should include the three most recent monthly award statements. The school will combine these figures with information about ‘take-home’ pay. The ‘take-home’ pay figure in addition to the amount of Universal Credit after all deductions will give a total monthly income. Using statements for three months will give household income for a quarter of a year and therefore an estimated annual income will be calculated.

Step 2: Those students who wish to apply to be eligible for Bursary will be advised to request a Financial Assessment Application Form from Miss Malik, Operational Administrator.

Step 3: Financial Assessment Application Forms should be completed and returned, with evidence to assess eligibility, to the Operational Administrator, Miss Malik.

Step 4: The Operational Administrator, in consultation with the Director of Sixth Form, will assess each application to determine if a bursary will be offered.

Step 5: Applicants will be advised as to the outcome of their applications by letter. The letter will also inform students of the process to make an application to assess the Bursary.

Step 6: All students who are eligible to access the Bursary will have a meeting to identify their specific needs and the most effective way of using Bursary funding to remove barriers to full participation in 6th Form life. This meeting will take place at least annually to discuss individual needs.

Stage 2: Applications to Access Bursary

Step 1: Those students who are confirmed to be eligible to access the Bursary must complete a separate bursary request form for each request to access funds.

Step 2: The request form must be passed to Miss Malik before items are purchased or bookings made.

Step 3: Confirmation will be provided to the student if their request has been approved.

Step 4: After confirmation has been received, students can proceed to make purchases or bookings and should provide receipts to Miss Malik who will process claims to reimburse payments.

Uses of the 16-19 Bursary:

Below is a list of the likely uses of the Bursary along with financial totals though it remains at the discretion of the Director of Sixth Form to authorise additional uses of the Bursary in exceptional circumstances not covered below.

- ✓ Contribution to clothing and/or shoes for school (smart business wear) up to the value of £150 - receipts must be provided.
- ✓ Contributions towards travel costs to a maximum value of £300 – This may be a Centro/Network West Midlands or other similar bus, train or tram pass. A contribution to the cost of a Green Bus pass can be made to the value of £300.
- ✓ Reimbursement of costs met for books/other school equipment such as scientific calculators or stationary up to a value of £100 - receipts must be provided.

- ✓ Contribution to the purchase of a laptop or tablet to support learning up to the value of £400 - if a student has purchased one during this year 12, a second device cannot be purchased during year 13.
- ✓ Contributions to other compulsory curriculum activities and visits. The Bursary cannot be used for extra-curricular visits.
- ✓ Contribution towards travel to University Open Days – travel receipts must be provided.
- ✓ UCAS registration fee (currently £20).
- ✓ Support to identify widening participation opportunities in Higher Education – Summer Schools, Access Schemes - and contributions to travel costs or course fees where appropriate.
- ✓ Bursary awards may be made for specified course related costs and/or other costs viewed as presenting a barrier to the individual student'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.
- ✓ The School may use the Bursary at its discretion to support a student experiencing financial hardship in other ways which are deemed appropriate by the school.
- ✓ Any equipment purchased by the school for use by an individual student remains the property of the school and must be returned upon completion of or withdrawal from the course.

The school will also use the Bursary to purchase a small bank of laptop computers which can be loaned on a long or short term basis to students who are eligible for the Bursary to support with their studies. During and post COVID, the school has allowed students to purchase one electronic device during their time in sixth form to support their learning.

Monitoring the Bursary:

- Receipt of bursary payments are conditional upon a student meeting attendance, behaviour, punctuality and performance standards which are agreed in advance.
- If the student does not meet the agreed attendance, behaviour, punctuality and performance standards, which will be monitored on a half termly basis, the school will make every effort to advise the student and help resolve any issues but retains the right to rescind or suspend bursary payment(s).

Appeals Process

- Should students disagree with the outcome of either their application for a bursary award or, where a payment has been withheld due to attendance/behaviour, they should follow the School's complaints procedure. All appeals will be considered by the Director of Sixth Form.
- The letter of appeal should include the student name and form and the reasons for the appeal. Any additional information can be provided and attached to the appeal.
- Written confirmation of the outcome of the appeal will be sent out within 10 days of the appeal being considered.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, taking into account the views of the school, young people and their parents and guidance from the Department for Education. It will be reviewed and approved by the Finance Committee of Governors or Full Board where required.

Miss C Berry

Headmistress

September 2023