

# 16 – 19 Bursary Fund Policy

## Priory Woods School



**Approved by:** Full Governing Board **Date:** 12 December 2023

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### 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

### 2. Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2022-to-2023-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 body

The governing body has overall responsibility for approving the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

The governing body 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 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 School Business Manager and the Post 16 Lead will take responsibility for the implementation and management of this.

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

### 4.4 Parents

Parents should notify staff or the headteacher 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 where necessary to fund:
  - Transport for after school clubs
  - Specialist equipment needed for a student to be able to access the curriculum or to develop their independence in life skills (including equipment recommended by OT or physio).
  - Educational visits that support the curriculum, residential visits and other course-related costs.
  - Lunches at College
  - Equipment/Uniform required for school and work experience opportunities

## 6. Eligibility criteria

### 6.1 Age

- › To be eligible:
  - A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2022
- › 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

- › Priory Woods School is an eligible education provision under the guidance issued by the ESFA.
- › 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. If this is the case we will discuss with them the support they may need under this policy.

### 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 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) **and** evidence of receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment.

## 6.6 Discretionary bursaries

- In assessing an application for a discretionary bursary, we will consider:
  - Level of household income/receipt of certain benefits listed below.
  - Whether the student has additional needs that may mean they need extra help or will incur extra costs as a result of that need.
- To assess household income, we will ask to see:
  - Proof of benefits letters (for example Income Support, Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance, guarantee element of Pension Credit
  - Child tax credit award notifications
  - Universal Credit award notices

We will consider additional requests where families are not in receipt of the above benefits/tax credits on a case-by-case basis.

## 7. Payment

### 7.1 Process

Payments are made using the following process:

Where possible we will pay for services or equipment needed directly as a school from the individual student's bursary allocation.

If this is not possible we will reimburse pupils by a BACS transfer into their bank account once proof of the expenditure (receipts, etc) has been received. **Any money to be spent by students/parents/carers and reimbursed must be agreed in advance.**

Applications should ideally be submitted by the beginning of October half term 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 maintaining regular attendance at Priory Woods 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 sign a declaration on behalf of the student confirming that they 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. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the School Business Manager every two years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the headteacher.