

## Brigshaw High School Sixth Form: 16 to 19 Bursary Fund Policy

### *Monitoring and Review of this Document:*

The Trust shall be responsible for reviewing this document annually to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.



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Providing a cradle to career education that allows our children to enjoy lives of **choice** and **opportunity**



### Document Controls

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|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Policy Document:</b>                         | Brigshaw High School Sixth Form: 16 to 19 Bursary Fund Policy |
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## 1. *Aims and Scope*

The 16 to 19 bursary fund provides financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries and this policy refers to both:

- Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups
- Discretionary bursaries

This policy aims to:

- Set out clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of 16 to 19 bursary funds
- Ensure funds are administered appropriately, fairly and consistently with due regard to the Equality Act 2010
- Provide complete clarity to parents/carers and students regarding available support, eligibility criteria and application procedures
- Outline clear attendance, academic and behavioural conditions required to access the funds

## 2. *Guidance*

This policy is based on advice and post-16 bursary funding guidelines set directly by the [Department for Education \(DfE\) for post-16 provision](#).

As an academy within a multi-academy trust, this policy complies with the Brigshaw Learning Partnership's funding agreement and articles of association.

This policy will be published on the Trust and school websites in September of each academic year, and sign posted in the 6th form area ahead of the start of term.

## 3. *Definitions*

- **'In care'**: 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'**: 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'**:
  - A young person aged 16 or 17 who was previously looked after for a period of at least 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 turning 18 for a period of at least 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 Trust Board

The Trust Board has overall legal and fiduciary responsibility for:

- Approving the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund Policy.
- Ensuring sound financial management, compliance with ESFA regulations, and proper audit procedures across the academy.
- Receiving periodic reporting on bursary allocation and expenditure.

### 4.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring staff are familiar with the policy and that it is applied consistently across the Sixth Form.
- Ensuring eligibility criteria and award assessments comply with the Equality Act 2010.
- Serving as the final arbiter for formal bursary appeals.

### 4.3 The Finance Team

Operational management, application assessment, and allocation of the fund is led by the **Finance Team** in collaboration with Sixth Form leadership. The Finance Team is responsible for:

- Receiving and reviewing all student bursary applications.
- Verifying supporting income and benefit evidence.
- Assessing individual financial need and calculating proportional bursary awards.
- Processing BACS payments and maintaining auditable financial records.

### 4.4 Parents/Carers & Students

- **Parents/carers** are expected to notify Sixth Form staff immediately of any changes in financial circumstances that might affect bursary eligibility.
- **Students** are responsible for meeting the clear attendance, punctuality, and behavioural expectations required to receive payments.

## 5. *How we use the Bursary Fund*

The fund helps eligible students overcome financial barriers to participation. Bursary funding can be used for:

- Transport costs
- Essential textbooks and revision guides
- Course equipment and specialist clothing
- Essential field trips and course-related activities
- University open day and interview travel costs
- Emergency meal and travel support

Where possible, the academy provides support through **payments in kind** (e.g., travel passes, vouchers, purchasing equipment directly).



**Exclusions:** The bursary cannot be used for general living costs, non-essential extracurricular activities or standard learning/pastoral support provided by the school.

**Note on Equipment:** Laptops or tools purchased by the academy remain school property and must be returned upon completion of the study programme.

## 6. *Eligibility Criteria*

Eligibility is assessed alongside individual financial need. **No student is automatically guaranteed funding without an assessment of actual need.** Funding is allocated based on evidence of participation costs, not flat-rate payouts. Students who do not have participation costs will not receive funding

### 6.1 Age

- Must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August of the academic year.
- Students aged 19 or over are only eligible for discretionary bursaries if they are a '19+ continuer' on the course they started aged 16 to 18, or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

### 6.2 Education Provision and Residency

- Provision must be publicly funded and subject to inspection by an official body (e.g., Ofsted)
- Students on apprenticeships or waged training are **not** eligible.
- Students must meet standard ESFA post-16 residency requirements.

### 6.3 Asylum Seekers

- **Accompanied / Over 18:** Entitled to education; in-kind support provided (books/travel) if asylum is not refused
- **Unaccompanied Children:** Treated as looked-after children and eligible to apply under vulnerable group criteria. Upon turning 18, they will be treated as "care leavers" if their status is resolved in their favour.

## 7. *Types of Bursary*

### 7.1 Bursaries for Students in Defined Vulnerable Groups

Eligible students meeting age and residency rules can apply for a vulnerable group bursary (up to a maximum of £1,200 per year) if they fall into one of the following four categories:

- **In care:** Children looked after by a local authority, noting that privately fostered children are not included.
- **Care leavers:** Students who meet the full definition of a care leaver as outlined in Section 3 of this policy.
- **Receiving benefits in their own right:** Students receiving Income Support (IS) or Universal Credit (UC) in their own right because they financially support themselves and any dependents (such as a child) living with them.



- **Receiving disability benefits:** Students receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) *and* either Universal Credit or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) in their own right. (Note: DLA or PIP alone does not qualify).

#### **Required Evidence for Vulnerable Group Applications:**

**For Care / Care Leavers:** Direct written confirmation (letter or email) of current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority.

**For Students Receiving Universal Credit / Benefits in Their Own Right:** A copy of the DWP award notice in the student's name, plus proof of independent status (e.g., a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a utility bill, or child benefit/birth certificate if supporting a dependent child).

**For Disabled Students:** Official evidence of PIP or DLA alongside evidence of Universal Credit or ESA in the student's own name.

*Important Note on Allocations:* Awards are pro-rated for courses under 30 weeks or part-time hours, and amounts reflect actual demonstrated financial need. Vulnerable group status grants eligibility to apply; it does not constitute an automatic flat-rate entitlement or payout. The academy may exercise discretion on a case-by-case basis to provide additional support exceeding £1,200 per year from discretionary allocations or school funds if essential for the student to remain in education.

## **7.2 Discretionary Bursaries**

Discretionary bursaries are awarded based on gross annual household income and specific individual barriers to learning (such as distance to travel, the number of dependent children in the household, or additional responsibilities).

**Income Thresholds:** Eligibility is generally considered for households with a gross annual income of £30,000 or below, or those in receipt of Tax Credits. For Universal Credit applicants, the assessed net income threshold is £24,000 or below.

| <b>Income Type</b>                              | <b>Evidence Required (Must be verified by the school)</b>                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Income Support / Universal Credit</b>        | Award notice / Bank statements (within last 3 months) showing payments.                          |
| <b>Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA)</b>             | Award notice / Bank statement (within last 3 months).                                            |
| <b>Employment &amp; Support Allowance (ESA)</b> | Award notice / Bank statement (within last 3 months).                                            |
| <b>Self-Employment</b>                          | Copy of accounts for the most recent tax year (e.g., 2025/26) or official HMRC Tax Award Letter. |
| <b>Pensions</b>                                 | Pension statement or two consecutive payslips dated within the last 3 months.                    |
| <b>Working or Child Tax Credit</b>              | All pages of the active/current year award letter.                                               |



|                                         |                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Immigration &amp; Asylum Support</b> | Official Home Office letter showing active Part VI support status. |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|

### **7.3 Free School Meals (FSM) Support**

Applications for Free School Meals must be submitted to the Trust Finance Team via the designated online Google Form.

The link for the FSM form is made available to students by Sixth Form or finance staff upon request.

### **7.4 Exceptional Hardship and Emergency Support**

Students facing unexpected, severe financial hardship may apply for temporary, emergency meal and travel support prior to completing a full discretionary assessment.

Comprehensive records and documentation related to emergency support allocations will be securely maintained for audit purposes.

## **8. *Application and payment process***

### **8.1 Application Process**

Application packs are available during Sixth Form Induction Day or directly from the Sixth Form office. Completed forms with photocopied supporting evidence should ideally be submitted by **Friday 25th September** to allow fair allocation.

Applications remain open year-round for students whose financial circumstances change mid-year.

Applicants will be notified in writing (via email) of the outcome of their application and, where successful, the specific amount of support awarded.

Students must have demonstrated actual financial need to receive funding (for example, if a student's financial needs are already met from other sources or they have no relevant participation costs, they will not receive a bursary). Should an application be refused on this basis, the academy will discuss this directly with the student and, where applicable, their support worker, parent, or carer.

If a student wishes to challenge the outcome of their application, they must follow the formal appeals process outlined in Section 9 of this policy.

Any enquiries about the application process should be directed to [bhsfinance@brigshawtrust.com](mailto:bhsfinance@brigshawtrust.com).

### **8.2 Payment Method**

Payments are made using the following process:



**In-Kind Provision (Primary Method):** To ensure bursary funds directly address specific barriers to learning, the academy's standard practice is to provide support **in-kind**. The Finance Team will arrange for direct purchasing or provision of:

- Travel passes or bus tickets.
- Required textbooks, revision materials, and stationary.
- Essential course equipment, tools, or specialist clothing.
- Direct payment for mandatory field trips, course activities, or university entrance/interview expenses.
- Emergency meal vouchers or travel support.

**Direct Payments (Exceptional Circumstances Only):** Cash/BACS payments directly into a student's bank account are made only in exceptional circumstances where in-kind purchasing is not practical or possible (e.g., specific individual travel reimbursements where official receipts are provided).

Please note purchases must not be made directly by parents/carers or students without prior approval from the school finance team.

### 8.3 Conditions for Receipt of Support

To receive ongoing bursary support or equipment, students must adhere to the Sixth Form Code of Conduct:

- **Attendance:** Maintain at least **96% attendance** across all timetabled sessions.
- **Punctuality & Progress:** Arrive on time, meet academic deadlines, and maintain standard of work.
- **Impact of Illness/Caring:** Documented illness or caring responsibilities will be considered before support is withheld or suspended.
- **Behaviour:** Students must meet our expectations of behaviour (within the classroom and on the school site)

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

If students have received in-kind support such as equipment or travel cards, they will be asked to return these if they fail to meet the conditions. We will stop payments where students have decided to withdraw from a study programme.

## 9. Appeals, Complaints and Fraud

### 9.1 Appeals

Stage 1: Submit a written appeal to the Head of Post-16 Education within 14 days of a decision letter, detailing extenuating circumstances. Response target: 7 working days.

Stage 2: If unresolved, submit a final written appeal to the Headteacher, whose decision is final.

### 9.2 Complaints and Fraud

Complaints regarding policy administration should follow the BLP Complaints Policy.



The academy reserves the right to recover funds awarded under false or fraudulent claims, and significant instances of fraud, including any case exceeding £1,200 or that is novel, unusual, systemic or complex in nature, will be reported directly to the DfE.

## ***10. Audit, Monitoring and Review***

Record Keeping: Secure records of applications, evidence, Panel decision rationale, and payments are retained for 6 academic years.

Unspent Funds: Cannot be carried forward for more than 1 year and will be reported/returned to the DfE as required.

Administrative costs associated with the fund will not exceed 5% of the 16 to 19 bursary allocation, in line with DfE guidance.

Review Cycle: This policy will be formally reviewed every three years by the Executive Team.