



16-19 Bursary Policy 2020/21

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Statement of intent

At Fairfax we are committed to closing the attainment gap between pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and those from more affluent backgrounds, and to ensure that every young person has the opportunity to participate in and benefit from a place in 16-19 education and training.

We are committed to:

- The distribution of 16-19 bursaries via a fair and equal process that is transparent, accountable, and easily understood.
- Ensuring that information regarding the application, award, and administration of 16-19 bursaries is publically available via the academy website and sixth form administrator.
- Widening access to, and participation in, sixth form education.
- Monitoring and reviewing our policies to ensure effectiveness.
- Setting high targets and objectives to develop our culture of continuous improvement.
- Ensuring adequate resources are available to implement policies, as much as is reasonably practicable.
- Sharing and acquiring best practice through partnerships with neighbouring schools.

1. Eligibility

General

Students must be aged 16 or over and under 19 years old on 31 August 2020 to qualify for bursaries for the 2020/21 academic year.

Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers') or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Fairfax operates a no-cash policy and as such, bursary payments will be paid via the BACS system (directly into the student's bank account).

Each student applying for a Sixth Form bursary will need to complete appendix one attached, which confirms relevant bank details that can be used by the Finance Office.

Please note that funding for free school meals is now included within the Bursary funding from the Education Funding Agency; this means that where students take up the option of free school meals (FSM) following a successful application to the FSM system) then the value of those meals will be retrospectively removed from their Bursary payment. For example, if a student is successful in their bursary application for category 2 funding, then their termly bursary payment issued in spring of 2021 will be reduced by the cost of any free school meals that have been consumed during the previous autumn term 2020. Also, their summer term bursary payment will be reduced by the cost of any free school meals that have been consumed during the previous spring term 2020.

Category 1

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- In care
- 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.

Students who are in receipt of Income Support, Universal Credit, Disability Living Allowance, or Personal Independence Payments, as well as Employment and Support

Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right, may be entitled to a bursary of up to £1,200 per academic year paid in instalments of approximately £400 at the start of each term to support the costs of transport, school meals, books and equipment to enable participation in education.

Fairfax understands that vulnerable students may be harder to identify or engage in education and are less likely to be aware of the support available from the Bursary Fund. Fairfax will, therefore, actively seek out and encourage vulnerable students to apply for support.

Category 2

Students who are entitled to free school meals (FSMs) will automatically qualify for the bursary if they have applied for FSMs online and been accepted. Please note, however it is essential that students in this particular category do still complete the application papers for the Sixth Form Bursary if they wish to apply for Bursary support.

Although it is difficult to confirm the amount of bursary funding until we know the number of successful applicants, it is possible to confirm that no student will receive more than £600 per year.

Eligible students in need of support with the costs of transport, school meals, books, and equipment, to enable participation in education, can apply for this discretionary bursary.

Category 3

Eligible students in need of support with the costs of transport, school meals, books, and equipment, to enable participation in education, can apply for a discretionary bursary if total household income is less than £20,000. Although it is difficult to confirm the amount of bursary funding for this category until we know the number of successful applicants, it is possible to confirm that no student will receive more than £300 per year.

Household income can be evidence by receipt of a current means tested state benefit or most recent Tax Credit Award Notice confirming household income of less than £20,000; or evidence of self-employment income of less than £20,000 (SA302 or certified accounts only) for the most recent tax year for the household.

2. How to Apply

An application form can be collected from the Sixth Form Centre or downloaded from the academy website. All applications need to be returned by **Friday, 16th October 2020** with all **original evidence attached** (please see the application form for a list of evidence required).

Please note that applications received after **Friday, 16th October 2020** will always be considered, but payments cannot always be backdated. Successful applicants submitted by this deadline will receive their first payment during the autumn term, with two further payments later in the Academic year; one in the spring term of 2021 and the final in the summer term of 2021. Full payment of the Bursary to the student is dependent on the delivery of the conditions listed in section 5 – Conditions.

For any late applications that are successful, payments may not commence until the following term after application, although immediate assistance may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

3. Contingency

Payments from the contingency fund will only be made in exceptional circumstances on the condition that students can demonstrate an urgent financial need.

If household income changes students can provide us with evidence of this and we can then reassess their current bursary award. Any changes will be reflected in the following terms payment.

4. Assessment

Fairfax will establish a Bursary Awards Panel which will assess each application for 16-19 bursaries.

The Bursary Awards Panel will consist of

- the Head of Sixth Form and
- the Sixth Form Administrator & Study Supervisor

and is accountable to the Academy Association.

Students who wish to make an application to either the Vulnerable Students Award or the Discretionary Bursary Award (category 1, 2 or 3) should do so no later than Friday

16th October 2020 in order for Fairfax to assess demand and make suitable provision prior to the commencement of the academic year.

Students in receipt of either the Vulnerable Students or the Discretionary Bursary should notify Fairfax if their circumstances change.

5. Conditions

Students must meet the following criteria in order to receive either their Vulnerable Students or Discretionary Bursaries.

- Maintain a good record of attendance (min 95% attendance)
- Be punctual to all lessons, supervised study periods and registration
- Attend all assemblies as appropriate
- Demonstrate appropriate behaviour
- Complete a 'Permission To Be Absent' form when needed
- Make satisfactory progress against targets
- At the end of each term, complete a form which records how the award was used to support education e.g. travel costs, text books, school trips, etc.

Failure to complete and submit an accurate record of spends and receipts may result in future payments being held back until we receive the completed record and receipts of evidence.

Receipts are required as evidence of any single purchase item over the value of £50. Accurate records of how the funds are utilised is a requirement and if not provided, could result in future payments being withheld.

Fraudulent claims for bursary allocations will be referred to the police and students found making false claims will be required to refund all payments received.

6. Appeals

Fairfax will establish a Bursary Appeals Panel consisting of the Head of Academy and a member of the Academy Association, to consider appeals relating to the award or administration of 16-19 bursaries.

Students who appeal to the Bursary Appeals Panel should outline their reasons why a decision was incorrect with specific reference to the circumstances, attendance and/or behaviour standards that determined the original decision.

The Bursary Appeals Panel will consider and respond to appeals within two weeks of receipt. If the appeal is upheld, it will be referred back to the Bursary Awards Panel with recommendations.

If the appeal is not upheld the appealing party will be directed to the School's Complaint Procedure.

7. Review

The 16-19 bursary policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, taking into account the views of Fairfax School, young people, the governing body report, and statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and the Education Funding Agency (EFA).