



16-19 Bursary Policy 2023/24

3 October 2023

The 16-19 Bursary Fund

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 their post-16 education.

The scheme is funded by the ESFA (Education & Skills Funding Agency) to provide assistance to students whose access to, or completion of, education is inhibited by financial constraints or barriers.

The bursary fund is intended to help students aged 16-19 years old with the essential costs of participating in their study programme, so to help with the cost of essential books or equipment or with the cost of travelling to school or college, for example. The bursary fund is not intended to support costs not related to education (living costs), extra-curricular activities or provide learning support – services that institutions give to students – such as counselling, mentoring or extra tutoring.

The scheme is made up of two parts:

- Vulnerable Bursary (Level 1) - a payment of £1,200 to a small group of the most vulnerable students
- Discretionary Bursary (Levels 2-4) - for schools, colleges and training providers to distribute at their discretion. The discretionary fund is allocated to eligible students and is dependent on the amount of funding and number of applications received in the academic year.

1. Eligibility Criteria for 16-19 Bursary Funding

Students following government (ESFA) funded full time or part-time courses, who are 16 years and over and satisfy one or more of the following criteria:-

- For Level 1 – Students aged at least 16 and under 19 years of age on 31/08/23 who are in care, are a care leaver (defined as 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), are in **direct receipt** of Income Support (or Universal Credit) in their own name or are disabled and in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payment).

- For Levels 2-4 – Students who are economically or socially disadvantaged and at risk of not taking up or continuing in their education. This group includes students with physical or other disabilities, medical conditions and/or learning difficulties.

It also includes students who have been in care, on probation, are young parents or are otherwise considered at risk. UASC (Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children) under the age of 18. Over the age of 18, UASC who have an asylum claim in their favour can receive the bursary; UASC who have had their "Appeals Rights Exhausted" (ARE), are not eligible.

Students with a total gross household income of less than £30,000 are also eligible. Evidence of household income is required. For Universal Credit, we require the 3 most recent monthly award statements. The take-home pay figure in addition to the amount of UC after all deductions will give a total monthly income. Using 3 months statements will act as a guide to the household income for a quarter of a year, and from this we can assume income for a full year.

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.

2. Applying for the 16-19 Bursary Fund

Students are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

The application process will be via a written application form which can be downloaded from the school website: <https://www.fairfax.bham.sch.uk/academy-life/sixth-form/financial-support/>

A copy will be sent out to all parents and carers at the launch of the fund, and copies are available in the Sixth Form Centre for students to collect.

Original qualifying documents are to be submitted with the application.

The deadline for applications is **Friday 13th October 2023**

Please note that applications received after this date will always be considered, but payments cannot always be backdated. Each application will be reviewed by the Bursary Fund Application Panel and successful applicants notified after the deadline date.

3. Assessment

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

The Bursary Awards Panel will consist of

- Assistant Principal, Post 16 Education and
- the Assistant Head of Sixth Form

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, 3 and should do so no later than Friday 13th October 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.

4. Payment of funds

Successful applicants submitted by the deadline will be required to access the fund **by requesting items for purchase**. Payments will be termly and deadline dates for requests for purchases will be shared with students. Please note that we cannot reimburse students for items purchased on their behalf. This is a requirement of the 16-19 Bursary Fund and is not a school-based decision.

To access the fund, students will complete a requisition form with their supervisor, and the school will purchase the item(s) on their behalf, provided they are essential items for participating in their study programme. Students will need to consider what they require over the course of each term. If students wish to reserve some of the termly amount for an item such as trip costs later in the year, they should discuss this with their supervisor.

Purchases can be made for the following items to support students in their learning. The list is not exhaustive, and we will consider other items:

- Travel passes
- Stationery products
- Subscriptions to academic/subject specific publications
- School expenses – trips
- Text books*
- Electronic equipment, such as laptops*

*Please note that any text books or electronic equipment purchased by the fund must be returned at the end of the study programme.

The Head of Sixth Form will have the final decision as to whether the item is suitable for school setting.

5. Criteria for receipt of funds

Students' performance will be monitored and reviewed on a termly basis. Payments

during each term will be based on the criteria outlined below for the previous term e.g. Spring and Summer term payment will be based on meeting the criteria throughout the Autumn term and Spring term respectively.

Level 1 Bursary – students will continue to receive the payment as long as they continue to attend Fairfax School and are registered on a full programme of study (3 A Level subjects). Students will need to meet the basic expectations of all sixth form students as outlined in the code of conduct.

Level 2, 3 and 4 Bursary – students will continue to receive bursary fund payments if they:

- Have an attendance rate of a minimum of 97%.
- Be punctual to all lessons and registration.
- Attend all assemblies and enrichment sessions.
- Complete a leave of absence in advance for any time you need to take off.
- Meet expectations of all sixth form students as outlined in the code of conduct.
- Make satisfactory progress against targets and attend all examinations.

6. Bursary Fund at a glance

Bursary	Amount of payment	Frequency of payment*	Criteria for eligibility – students aged under 19 on 31/08/2023	Criteria for continued payment of bursary
Level 1 (defined vulnerable groups)	Up to £1200 per year dependent on personal circumstances	Termly, upon request of items listed as necessary to support progress on the course. Deadline dates will apply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are currently in care (as defined by social services). • Are leaving or have recently left care after being in care for 13 weeks since age of 14. • Are in receipt of Income Support/ Universal Credit in their own name. • Are disabled and in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance (Personal Independence Payments). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change in household financial circumstances. • Continued attendance at Fairfax Academy • Adhere to the Academy Behaviour Policy

Level 2 (discretionary)	Dependent on number of applications and personal circumstances	Have a gross annual household income of up to £20,000 (priority given to students who claim free school meals) Evidence required of income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an attendance rate of a minimum of 97%. • Be punctual to all lessons and registration. • Attend all assemblies and enrichment sessions. • Complete a leave of absence in advance for any time you need to take off. • Meet expectations of all sixth form students as outlined in the code of conduct. • Make satisfactory progress against your targets and attend all examinations.
Level 3 (discretionary)	As above, but lower value	Have a gross annual household income of between £20,001 and £25,000. Evidence required of income.	
Level 4 (discretionary)	As above, but lower value	Have a gross annual household income of between £25,001 and £30,00. Evidence required of income.	

*The school reserves the right to change the frequency dependent on individual circumstances

7. Appeals

Bursary Fund appeals procedure If a student wishes to appeal against the allocation of the 16-19 bursary fund this will need to be put in writing, along with any evidence to support the appeal and sent to Mr Sean Castle, Principal. The Appeals Panel will consist of: Headteacher, a Member of the Governing Body and Assistant Principal, Post 16 Education. Each appeal will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis against the published criteria for eligibility.