



The
Westgate School

#equippedforlife

Sixth Form Bursary Policy

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1. Statement of Principles

- 1.1 This policy is based on advice from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 '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).
- 2.2 'Looked After Child' is defined as: 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).
- 2.3 '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 amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16.

3. Statement of Intent

The purpose of this policy is to:

- 3.1 Have a clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.
- 3.2 Make clear to parents and students the type of support which is available and the means of applying for it.
- 3.3 Make clear to parents and students the attendance and code of conduct/home school agreement for receiving the funds.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

This section of The Westgate School's Sixth Form Bursary Policy outlines the specific roles and responsibilities.

4.1 Staff

- 4.1.1 The Sixth Form Leadership Team is responsible for formulating, implementing, and monitoring the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund fairly and consistently.

4.2 Parents

- 4.2.1 Parents are expected to notify the Head of Year of any concerns, queries or change of circumstances regarding the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

4.3 Students

- 4.3.1 Students have the responsibility to apply for funding using the Bursary+ platform with appropriate evidence.

5. How we use the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund

- 5.1 Financial support is available to eligible students from the 16 to 19 Bursary Funds. Please see section 6 below for details of our eligibility criteria.
- 5.2 The fund is intended to support students aged 16 to 19 in overcoming specific financial barriers so that they can remain in education.
- 5.3 There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries: bursaries for defined vulnerable groups and discretionary bursaries (please see Section 7 and 8).
- 5.4 We use the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund to provide students with support to fund:
 - 5.4.1 Trips – any enrichment, extra-curricular or co-curricular opportunity that relates to a course being taken. No additional subsidies will be available.
 - 5.4.2 Uniform – any purchase must conform to The Westgate School's Sixth Form Dress Code (included within the starter pack distributed during the induction process and stated on the school website).
 - 5.4.3 Educational IT Equipment and software e.g., laptop or tablet – The Westgate School's Sixth Form have a stock of laptops that can be loaned to bursary approved students for the duration of their studies.
 - 5.4.4 Public Transport – part payment or full payment dependent on need.
 - 5.4.5 Stationery.
 - 5.4.6 University visits and interviews – The Sixth Form Heads of Year will consider transport costs either part or full payment dependent on need (a maximum two visits will only be subsidised).
 - 5.4.7 Other educational resources i.e., books as agreed with the support of staff from curriculum areas that can be ordered on the applicants' behalf.

6. Eligibility Criteria for the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund at The Westgate School

- 6.1 **Age**
 - 6.1.1 To be eligible for either bursary in the 2026 to 2027 academic year, students must be at least 16 years old but under 19 years old on 31st August 2026.
 - 6.1.2 Students aged 19 or over are eligible only for a discretionary bursary if they:
 - 6.1.2.1 Are continuing a study programme or course which they began when they were aged 16 to 18 years old, and/or;
 - 6.1.2.2 Have an education, health, and care plan (EHCP).
 - 6.1.3 Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for defined vulnerable groups.
 - 6.1.4 In exceptional circumstances, where students under 16 years old are on a funded 16 to 19 study programme at our school, we may use our discretion to pay bursaries to these younger students. However, if these students are enrolled at another institution that receives public funding for them, they will not be eligible for bursary funding.
- 6.2 **Eligible Education Provision**
 - 6.2.1 Students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (e.g., Ofsted).
 - 6.2.2 The provision must also fall into one of these groups:
 - 6.2.2.1 Be funded directly by the ESFA or by the ESFA via a local authority;
 - 6.2.2.2 Be funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund;
 - 6.2.2.3 Be otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including Level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual or is on the ESFA's list of qualifications approved for funding 14 to 19;
 - 6.2.2.4 Be a 16 to 19 traineeship programme, and/or;

- 6.2.3 Students are not eligible if:
 - 6.2.3.1 They are on an apprenticeship programme; and/or;
 - 6.2.3.2 Are on any waged training.
- 6.2.4 Students who are studying via distance learning are eligible for the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund but are likely to require financial help on a more infrequent basis (e.g., travel to exams). If this is the case, we will provide support in-kind, such as a travel pass, details of which shall be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- 6.3 **Residency**
 - 6.3.1 Students must meet the residency criteria in the ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision.
- 6.4 **Asylum Seekers**
 - 6.4.1 Accompanied asylum seekers under 18 with an adult relative or partner and asylum seekers aged 18 and above are entitled to education but are not entitled to public funds. If necessary, they can apply to the Home Office for suitable housing and cash for essentials.
 - 6.4.2 We will provide in-kind support such as books, equipment and a travel pass to asylum seekers who have not had asylum refused.
 - 6.4.3 Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children:
 - 6.4.3.1 Are the responsibility of the local authority;
 - 6.4.3.2 Are to be treated as 'looked after' children; and/or;
 - 6.4.3.3 Are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups, where they have a financial need.
 - 6.4.4 When these students reach 18 years old, we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary as a student from a defined vulnerable group if the asylum claim is in their favour and will be treated as a 'care leaver' until they reach the upper age limit.

7. Bursaries for Young People in Defined Vulnerable Groups

- 7.1 Young people in the defined vulnerable groups are eligible for a bursary of up to £1,200 if their course lasts for 30 weeks or more.
- 7.2 To be eligible for the vulnerable bursary, students must be in one of the defined vulnerable groups:
 - 7.2.1 In care;
 - 7.2.2 Care leavers (please see Section 2.3);
 - 7.2.3 In receipt of Income Support, or Universal Credit in place of Income Support, in their own right, and/or;
 - 7.2.4 In receipt of Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit and Disability Living Personal Independence Payments in their own right.
- 7.3 Students who meet the criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups are not automatically entitled to a bursary.
- 7.4 Students will not receive the bursary if they do not have any actual financial need (for example, because their financial needs are met from other sources and/or because they have no relevant costs).

- 7.5 Where a bursary is provided, the funds will generally be up to £1,200 per year for study programmes lasting 30 weeks or more. When calculating the amount, cases will be looked at individually and the outcome based on a particular student's needs.
- 7.6 Students will only receive the amount they need to participate and will not automatically receive £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.
- 7.7 We will provide this support for students from the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund by making payments in kind where possible. It will not be provided as regular payments for living costs.

8 Discretionary Bursaries

- 8.1 In addition to the criteria outlined in Section 6, students can apply for a discretionary bursary if they satisfy the following criteria:
 - 8.1.1 Gross annual household income is below £25,000 (including earned income and benefits received), and/or;
 - 8.1.2 Students who do not satisfy any of the criteria listed in this section, but who are able to demonstrate financial hardship arising from other reasons.
- 8.2 There is no set limit for the amount of discretionary bursary that can be awarded to students. We will base all decisions around which students receive a discretionary bursary, and how much bursary they receive, on each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need and the available funds.
- 8.3 We will review the student's eligibility position each academic year and students will only continue to receive a discretionary bursary if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

9 Evidence

- 9.1 All applications for 16 to 19 discretionary bursaries must be supported by appropriate evidence:
 - 9.1.1 A copy of the last three months of Universal Credit or Income Support award notices, in the parents' name;
 - 9.1.2 Documents such as a tenancy agreement in the parents' name, a child benefit receipt, birth certificate or utility bills;
 - 9.1.3 Written confirmation of the student's current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority, and/or;
 - 9.1.4 A copy of the Universal Credit claim from Department of Work and Pensions.
- 9.2 All applications for 16 to 19 vulnerable bursaries must be supported by appropriate evidence:
 - 9.2.1 In care: currently or previously looked after, since the age of 14, for at least 13 weeks, by the Local Authority;
 - 9.2.2 A care leaver;
 - 9.2.3 In receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit in their own right, and/or;
 - 9.2.4 In receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own right.

10 Application and Payment

- 10.1 Students will be invited to apply by the school. ~~Applications should ideally be submitted on the Bursary+ Platform and applications will be assessed on an individual basis by the date stated on the application form, to allow enough time for our school to assess the overall level of demand and make discretionary awards on a fair basis.~~
- 10.2 However, we acknowledge that students' circumstances may change and therefore the application process will remain open for the whole school year.

- 10.3 Applicants will be notified in writing (either via email or via letter) whether their application has been successful. If a student wishes to appeal the outcome of their application for a bursary, they must follow the school's complaints procedure.
- 10.4 ~~Students must discuss any possible claims with the Head of Year to ensure they are covered by the Bursary before they make any purchase. The specific claim must be submitted on Bursary+.~~

11 Conditions for the Receipt of Bursary Payments In Kind

- 11.1 Payments in kind of the bursary are conditional on students meeting the following conditions in relation to their standards of attendance and behaviour: 11.1.1 Attendance above 96% [subject to exceptional circumstances], and; 11.1.2 Following the Sixth Form Code of Conduct.
- 11.2 Students are required to sign a declaration confirming they agree to these conditions.
- 11.3 Students who fail to meet these conditions may have their payments in kind withheld, but we will always take students' individual circumstances into consideration. This includes considering the impact on attendance that might be caused by illness, caring responsibilities, or other exceptional circumstances.
- 11.4 We will consider the impact of such an action on the individual student before taking a final decision to do so, and any decision will be confirmed to the student in writing.

12 Change in Circumstances

- 12.1 If there are changes in circumstances which may affect eligibility for a bursary, applicants and/or parents/carers must notify the school without delay.

13 Record Keeping

- 13.1 Any paperwork and documents we retain for audit purposes (for example, copies of application forms, documents as evidence and any agreements signed by students) will be kept securely in line with our data protection policy, privacy notices and record retention schedule on the Bursary+ Secure Platform.
- 13.2 The Westgate School reserves the right to purchase items from the remaining contingency fund to provide immediate support to individual bursary students. This may include spare uniform, additional school trips or unforeseen pastoral needs. Any unused items will be made available to the following year's bursary students.

14 Monitoring Arrangements

- 14.1 This policy will be reviewed by the SLT member with responsibility for The Westgate School's Sixth Form in conjunction with the Sixth Form Heads of Year at the beginning of each academic year. At every review, it will be shared with the Governors and approved by the Headteacher.

15 Links with Policies

This policy is linked to, but not exclusively or extensively, to The Westgate School's:

- 15.1.1 *Parent's Handbook*
- 15.1.2 *Staff Handbook*
- 15.1.3 *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*
- 15.1.4 *Behaviour Policy*
- 15.1.5 *The Westgate School's Attendance Policy*