



POLICY FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE 16-19 BURSARY FUND

PURPOSE

To provide the principles by which all young people in post 16 education across the Learn to Live Federation will have equality of access to financial support through the 16-19 Bursary Fund. This guidance should be read in conjunction with national EFA Guidance (see useful links below).

It should be noted that Bursary Funding is not an automatic entitlement. The aims and ethos of the scheme are to remove financial barriers to staying in education. It should be used to meet the costs of staying in education and providing equipment which is essential to study. These may include the costs of transport, learning materials and equipment eg Chef's whites.

Funds do not form part of delegated school funding from the Local Authority, they are distributed to the schools from the Learner Support Service and the Education Funding Agency.

TYPES OF SUPPORT AVAILABLE

1. Vulnerable Bursary – Eligibility criteria for this group is very narrow.

- Young people in care,
- care leavers
- young people in receipt of 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
- young people in receipt of **both** Employment Support Allowance or Universal credit, **in their own right** , and also in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal independence payments, **in their own right**

Students in this group will be eligible to receive a vulnerable bursary of £1200 a year. However, this award is dependent upon the young person needing financial support from the scheme. The Learn to live Federation has the discretion under EFA guidelines to award a greater or lesser award dependent upon the needs of the individual for

Reviewed by Governors Autumn 2018.
Next Review Due Autumn 2020

financial support. In cases where there are no financial needs, e.g the young person is in a specialist residential setting then no award may be made.

The federation is responsible for identifying Young People who fall into the vulnerable bursary group. Written confirmation of the young person's looked after status or evidence of receipt of the above benefits will be needed to support the payment of the Guaranteed Award.

2. **Discretionary Bursary – targeted towards Young People facing financial barriers to remaining in education.** Schools have discretion to set their own eligibility criteria and awards will vary dependent upon individual circumstances, the number of applications and the amount of funding available.

PAYMENT METHOD

The payment method used both types of bursary will be via 'in kind' payments at the discretion of the school and will be arranged to best meet the individual learners' needs and circumstances. Payments direct to families will only be made in exceptional cases to reimburse expenditure where authorised pre-payments have been made – this is in line with the EFA guidance, Bursary awards will only be given to meet participation related costs and will not be granted for holiday or weekend activities.

EQUIPMENT

All equipment purchased under both schemes should be returned to the school at the end of the period of study unless they are personal in nature such as clothing or specifically adapted equipment.

DISCRETIONARY AWARDS

Due to the limits based on budgets, in order to have the greatest impact on learners, Discretionary Awards will be targeted at those facing the greatest financial hardship. The following priority groups will be used to manage applications:

Priority One: Learners in receipt of Free School Meals.

Priority Two: Learners who may not be in receipt of Free School Meals but may be from a low income family who may receive one of the following state benefits:

- Income Support.
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance.
- Employment Support Allowance (Income Related).
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Guarantee Element of Pension Credit.
- The **maximum** level of Working Tax Credit.

- Child Tax Credit if it is the only benefit received, and where annual income, as assessed by the Inland Revenue does not exceed £16,190.

Priority Three

Other families with low family income or experiencing financial hardship.

Evidence and Assessing Applications

Applications from priority two and three categories must provide evidence of entitlement to benefits and evidence of household income. However, this is not the only measure that should be used in assessing an applications and individual circumstances will be considered to assess the level of financial need. Evidence to support such applications should be addressed to the Executive Head and will be treated in strictest confidence.

Satisfying these eligibility criteria can not guarantee funding to any learner and the school will need to consider other factors including the purpose for which the funding support is requested and the budget available. In the first instance, Discretionary awards will be allocated to help learners meet costs in relation to transport to and from school with any remaining funds being used for other essential items related to their individual course of study such as equipment, trips and meals whilst attending school.

ADMINISTERING THE FUND - ARRANGEMENTS FOR APPLICATION AND APPEAL

Opening and Closing Points for Applications to the Bursary Fund: Families will be alerted to the existence of the 16-19 Bursary Fund as part of the review process in the year preceding their Post 16 education. The Childrens' Services Co-ordinator and class teacher will liaise with families to support them in the submission of any application.

Application forms will be available from the school office, the school website and will also be distributed to Post 16 students at the start of the academic year.

Post 16 Transport Applications: The Learn to Live Federation has a Service Level Agreement in place with DCC Transport Department which allows students to apply to the 16-19 Bursary for payment of their transport costs via their transport application system. DCC Transport assess eligibility on the basis of **Free School Meals eligibility** criteria and invoice the Federation directly on behalf of eligible pupils. This usually takes place in the Summer Term. Schools in the Federation may also agree to fund transport costs for pupils who are not eligible for Free School Meals but are still granted funding under other criteria via the CBF1 form which is submitted to the Transport Department.

Reviewed by Governors Autumn 2018.
Next Review Due Autumn 2020

Decision Making and Appeals Process: Applications will be heard by the Senior Leadership Team. Appeals will be heard by the Governors CBT Committee. Complaints will be dealt with in line with normal school procedure.

How Decisions will be communicated to Young People and their Families: Students and their families will receive information about their application by letter no later than one month following the application being made. All documentary evidence will also be copied and returned by this date. Copies to be held securely on file.

Policy on Fraud: Any incidents of suspected fraud will be reported to the police.

Administrative Procedures: The school will have administrative procedures that record bursary applications and awards (including number, value, purpose and whether awarded or not and brief justification) so that all EFA audit and reporting requirements are satisfied.

WITHHOLDING FUNDS AND BUDGETING

The school will retain 10% of the discretionary fund to act as a contingency to meet the needs of learners who may face financial hardship during the academic year. This may be for learners who move into the 'vulnerable' group during the academic year, changes in learners' circumstances, or learners who start mid-year.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE FUND

Schools are entitled to deduct 5 % of the total discretionary funding allocation to cover the costs of administering the scheme. In view of the large amount of administration required to run the scheme the Learn to Live Federation have taken the decision to deduct this sum.

Useful Links

Bursary Fund Guide

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide>

Q and A for Young People and Parents

<https://www.gov.uk/16-to-19-education-financial-support-for-students>