

Aspire Sixth Form **16-19 Bursary Fund Policy**



Purpose of the Fund

The purpose of the 16-19 Bursary Fund is to provide financial help to learners who are facing financial difficulty which means that they would be prevented from or struggle to participate in education and training without some help towards the costs linked with learning. Aspire Sixth Form are able to award vulnerable student and discretionary bursaries based on the needs of individual students, taking into account their individual circumstances and within the guidelines and funding awarded by the EFA.

Allocation

The school is able to offer discretionary bursaries through funding allocated to us from the Education Funding Agency (EFA). The school is also able to access additional funding from the EFA to support students who are eligible for a vulnerable student bursary.

Criteria for allocation

Bursaries will only be allocated to students on an individual basis against the criteria set out below. All students aged 16 or over studying in the Sixth Form are eligible to apply if they feel they meet the criteria. However, this is pro-rata if the student's course is for less than 30 weeks and pro-rata to the number of hours of study in line with the student status bands. It can be a higher amount if the school considers this necessary to enable the young person to continue in education.

Group One Vulnerable Student Bursary

Students who are aged 16 or over and under 19 on 31 August are entitled to apply for a Vulnerable Student Bursary if they meet one of the following:

- you are in or recently left local authority care
- you get Income Support or Universal Credit because you're financially supporting yourself
- you get Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in your name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit
- you get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your name and either ESA or Universal Credit

Young people in the defined vulnerable groups are usually living apart from their parents/carers, so they can get social security benefits in their own right. However, they do not have to be living independently of their parents; they can claim ESA or UC in their own right, although their parents will not be able to claim Child Benefit for them, if the young person's claim succeeds.

The bursary award is a maximum bursary of £1200 a year. However, this is pro-rata if the student's course is less than 30 weeks and it can be a higher amount if the school considers this necessary, to enable the young person to continue in education. The bursary may be a reduced amount if the student's financial needs are met by others means or they have no relevant costs, e.g. where a student is in local authority care and their costs are covered.

Group Two Discretionary Bursary

If your total household income is below £20,000 you will be eligible to a full bursary award and if it is between £20,000- £27,000 you will be eligible for one of the partial contribution bursary awards (please see table on page 2). Evidence of household income will be required and payment will be based on both attendance and academic performance

Please be aware that giving false or incomplete information that leads to incorrect/overpayment may result in future payments being stopped and any incorrectly paid funds being recovered. This may also result in a referral to the police with the possibility of facing prosecution.

To qualify, you must be 16 or over and under 19 years of age on the 31st of August in the academic year in which you start your studies. Each successful applicant will be entitled to either the full or partial baseline bursary which is to contribute to support both travel and meals costs.

Further funding can also be requested for eligible items intended to support your studies such as:-

- Books/materials/equipment.
- Required trips, visits and field courses.
- UCAS fees and University open day visits.
- Professional clothing for attendance at Sixth form or interviews, all claims for clothing must meet the standards of Aspire Sixth Forms dress policy.
- Other items relevant to the individual student, this can include sportswear if appropriate to a student's course such as PE students.

To make a claim simply fill out a claim form and attach a valid receipt. Reimbursement claims have to be made within 3 months of the original purchase date provided on the receipt to be accepted. The final deadline for submitting a claim form is 2 weeks before the end of the academic year. Students will not be eligible for payment on any month where their attendance falls below 90%.

We will notify your son/daughter of the value of this amount, in writing when the claim has been processed and approved by Finance.

Please see table below for a breakdown of the bursary offer:-

Distance (miles)	Below £20k		£20k - £25k		£25k - £27k	
	Per month £	Annual £	Per month £	Annual £	Per month £	Annual £
15+	50	500	45	450	40	400
5 to 15	45	450	40	400	35	350
0 to 5	40	400	35	350	30	300

Any bursary award will be subject to students meeting all the targets and objectives set out in their Sixth Form Learning Agreement, satisfactory attendance, and standard of behaviour and providing documentary evidence to the Bursary Panel.

Evidence required:

Group 1 – you need to provide written evidence from your Local Authority of your care status and/or evidence of the benefits mentioned in the section above.

Group 2 – you need to provide proof of household income levels such as P60, Self-employed tax return, Universal Credit, Tax Credits, Income Support award letter or other benefits award letter that demonstrates total household income.

Please note household income is based on the previous tax year.

Administration

Applications will be accepted any time during the academic year up to the last day of the first half of the summer term and may be made at a pro rata rate from the date of application to the year end date.

Payment for the full Bursary (Group One) will be made directly to students' bank accounts. Payments are made monthly via BACS into the students bank or building society account.

Payment for Group Two will be agreed and arranged on an individual basis directly to students' bank accounts monthly via BACS into the students bank or building society account. "Payment in kind" may be considered appropriate, e.g. for food, books, course materials and travel passes, which will be deducted from the total bursary award. Payments for either Bursary will not be paid into another person's bank account unless there are exceptional circumstances where the student is unable to administer their own account 10% of the Bursary Fund allocation will be retained as a contingency until April of each year for students who join the school later than the start of the academic year. 5% of the total Bursary Fund will be retained to assist with administration costs.

Confidentiality

We handle applications confidentially and will make sure that students are not singled out (please talk to us if you are worried about this). Copies of information given in evidence to support applications will be retained by the school for audit purposes and will be kept confidentially.

Fraud

If students and/or parents/carers provide false or incomplete information or are not part of the household income that is relevant, the matter may be referred to the Department for Education or the Police. The student and parents/carers could face prosecution and the school will recover any payments the student is not eligible for.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Deputy Headteacher and Head of Sixth Form will be responsible for ensuring that students meet targets and objectives as per their Learning Agreement. Failure to do so may result in the funding being withdrawn. The Bursar will be responsible for monitoring and reporting student absence in accordance to

the school absence protocol and maintaining records in accordance with the requirements of the EFA and audit. The Bursar will be responsible for reporting to the EFA as appropriate. The 16-19 Bursary Fund Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Governing Body.

Appeals

Applicants should be aware that funding available for Criteria Two is limited. All applications received will be considered by the Bursary Panel. The Bursary Panel consists of the Deputy Head teacher and Head of Sixth Form and the School Business Manager. The Bursary Panel reserves the right to award funding as it sees appropriate. The decision made by the Bursary Panel on the level of funding awarded is final. The

Governors Appeals Committee will receive and determine only upon any appeals where funding is refused. Appeals should be addressed to the Clerk of the Governors c/o the school.