



# **The Edith Borthwick School**

## **16-19 Bursary Policy**

**September 2024**

<b>Lead Governor</b>	<b>Stephanie Taylor</b>
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## THE EDITH BORTHWICK SCHOOL

### **16-19 Bursary Policy September 2024 to July 2025**

The 16-19 Bursary Fund has been allocated to schools that provide educational facilities to students aged 16 to 19. To be eligible to receive a bursary the young person must be 16 or over on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024, but under 19 on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024. Students joining the school at age 19 are eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they meet criteria and are continuing the same programme of study and/or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). In cases where a young person turns 19 during their programme of study they can be supported through to the end of that academic year

The 16 - 19 Bursary Fund Scheme provides financial support to help students overcome specific barriers to participation so that they can remain in education. At the Edith Borthwick School we are committed to a person-centred approach, preparing our learners for adult life and equipping them with the skills to realise their hopes and extend their potential. Many of our opportunities are community based and we work closely with students and their parents / carers to make best use of any Bursary funds. Awards may be used flexibly across the academic year to ensure maximum benefit to the student, but always to facilitate opportunities for learning and never as an incentive to reward attendance or behaviour.

The bursary funding is held within a ring-fenced cost centre in the delegated budget school bank account. The individual pupil expenditure is monitored by the school bursary co-ordinator.

A letter will be sent to all young people and their parents/carers at the beginning of the academic year outlining Bursary Policy details and inviting applications from students who may be eligible. Decisions on awards will be made based on the criteria determined by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA); there are 2 separate categories, and 3 priority groups.

#### **1. Vulnerable Bursaries – Priority Group 1**

An award of up to £1200 per academic year to young people aged 16 and over on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 and under 19 on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024 who fall within one of the following vulnerable groups:

- a. Are currently in care;
- b. Are leaving or have recently left care, including permanent fostering under a Special Guardianship Order

‘Care Leavers’ must meet the definition in full as set out below –

- 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

- c. Are in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them such as a child or partner (and which they are entitled to in their own right);
- d. Are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in their own right **and** Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit in their own right.

UC has now replaced IS, as well as other benefits above, for current and future young people aged 16 to 18. However, students aged 19 to 25 and funded from the 16 to 19 budget (19+ continuers and students with an EHC plan) may still receive the legacy benefits listed above.

Discussions will be held with parents/carers and students to identify a suitable use for the bursary funding on an individual basis, but common uses would be to help pay for residential visits, equipment and materials, transport costs, visits, uniform and community access activities.

If a student joins the school part way through an academic year, or an existing student becomes eligible part way through an academic year, the award will be made on a pro rata basis.

In some cases, a young person might be eligible for a Vulnerable Bursary because they meet criteria, but have no financial needs; in these cases there is the possibility of no award or a limited award being the outcome of an application.

Any Vulnerable Bursary underspends at the end of the academic year will be rolled forward into the following academic year and recycled to offset funding claims for vulnerable groups. Unused funding for bursaries for vulnerable groups can be added to the discretionary bursary allocation from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025.

## 2. **Discretionary Bursaries – Priority Groups 2 and 3**

These are targeted awards for young people aged 16 and over on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 and under 19 on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024 facing financial barriers to participation in education, such as the costs of transport, equipment, uniform, visits and other costs associated with learning. The bursary fund is not intended to support extra-curricular activities or provide learning support – services that institutions give to students – such as counselling, mentoring or extra tutoring. Students joining the school at age 19 are eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they meet criteria, are continuing the same programme of study and/or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

These discretionary bursaries will be split into two categories:

### ***Priority Group 2***

For those students who are in receipt of a Free School Meal and / or are paying the reduced rate for Post-16 Education Transport, an award will be made subject to confirmation by the Local Authority. A maximum award level will be set, dependent on the total number of discretionary bursaries applied for and the total amount of funding received by the Department for Education. Individual award levels for students in Priority Group 2 will be calculated and agreed based on

applicable costs and activities within their curriculum for this academic year. All awards will be based on circumstance individual financial need.

### ***Priority Group 3***

Awards can be made to students who have been identified as having genuine barriers to participating in education and being eligible for financial support, but who may not meet the eligibility criteria for Priority Group 2. Applications are invited from parents / carers, or students may be identified based on staff knowledge of change in circumstance. Decisions will be made between the Head, Deputy Head, and the school Business Manager, and must be supported by original evidence of family income and change in circumstance. All awards will be based on circumstance and individual financial need.

**For Priority Groups 1 and 3, proof of entitlement will be required and copies will be kept on file. UC claimants should be able to print off details to their award from their online account or provide a screenshot. For Priority Group 2 we will use information from the Local Authority regarding Free School Meals and Post-16 Education Transport applications. The school has the right to withdraw support if supporting evidence is not provided when requested.**

Each student's profile will be looked at individually and all decisions made based on circumstance and individual financial need. All decisions will comply with the Equality Act 2010. Decisions made regarding awards will not be discussed with any other party, and any information gathered will be kept in the strictest confidence in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

### **Terms and Conditions**

- For both types of bursary, those students qualifying will receive 'in kind' financial assistance and there will be no cash payments to any student, or their parent/carer. Education Transport costs already paid by parents/carers may be refunded by cheque or electronic transfer of funds, subject to confirmation of the original payment by the Local Authority.
- The discretionary fund allocated to schools is a defined amount each year, decided by the Department for Education and based on a set calculation against varying pupil numbers. The allocations awarded to students will not exceed the amount that the school has been funded.
- If Vulnerable Bursary awards (Priority Group 1) are not completely spent within an academic year, funds remaining will be recycled to offset claims for vulnerable groups in the following academic year. Unused funding for bursaries for vulnerable groups can be added to the discretionary bursary allocation (Priority Groups 2 and 3) from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024.
- A small contingency will be held in the event that any financial circumstances may change during the course of the academic year. Any unspent contingency may be distributed amongst students in Priority Groups 2 and 3, by way of supporting activities, not cash payments.

- Parents/carers are expected to inform the school of any change in financial circumstance that may remove the need for financial assistance under the Bursary scheme at any point during the academic year.
- Parents/carers should be aware that if false or incomplete information is given to the school leading to incorrect or overpayment this may lead to recovery of funds or even referral to the relevant authorities
- Applications for awards under the 16 – 19 Bursary Fund scheme can be made at any point during the academic year.
- Continued payment of Bursary awards is dependent on students meeting expectations for behaviour and attendance, and support can be withdrawn if these are not met. Expectations will be clearly defined and shared with parent/carers and students when Bursary awards are made.
- Any items of equipment or resources that are purchased throughout the year using bursary funds for an individual student must be returned at the end of the study programme so that they can be used again by other students where appropriate.
- Any complaints which need to be made must follow the school's complaints policy
- It is important to note that the funds allocated by the ESFA may change each year, and therefore decisions, awards and allocated amounts may change on a year by year basis.
- Please be aware that receipt of bursary funding does not affect other means tested benefits, but Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit may affect eligibility for certain benefits e.g. Child benefit. We always recommend seeking professional advice before changing claims or applying for any household / individual benefits.