



## 16-19 Bursary Fund Policy 2019/2020

### Section 1: Introduction

Vale of Evesham School receives an annual allocation of 16-19 Bursary Funds from the Education Funding Agency (ESFA) to assist young people who face the greatest barriers to continuing in education or training post 16. If you are aged between 16 and 19 years old and think you might struggle with the costs for full-time education or training you may receive a bursary.

Vale of Evesham School operates the scheme in compliance with the ESFA '16-19 Bursary Fund Guide: 2019 to 2020 academic year' and this document sets out our approach to the use of the Bursary Fund in 2019/20, which will be reviewed annually .

### Section 2: Student Eligibility

The 16-19 Bursary has two elements:

- Students in the 'vulnerable group' as defined by the ESFA will be eligible to receive a **Guaranteed Bursary Award** of up to £1,170 per year, provided their costs are not met from other sources. The defined vulnerable groups are students who are: in care, care leavers, receiving 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), or receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right. Students in care may not qualify for a vulnerable bursary if they are in local authority care and their educational costs are covered in full by the local authority.
- We will also make individual **Discretionary Bursary Awards** that best fit the needs and circumstances of our students. Bursary awards will be targeted towards students facing financial barriers to participation and achievement, such as the costs of transport, meals, books or equipment etc. We will use eligibility for Free School Meals as a measure of financial hardship in the first instance. Receipt of a means tested benefit or dependency on parent(s) in receipt of a means tested benefit will also be taken into account.

*To be eligible for the bursary students must:*

- be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2019 or
- be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2019 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2019 and continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers')
- meet the residency criteria in ESFA 2019 to 2020 academic year funding regulations for post-16 provision
- be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body which assures quality (such as Ofsted), the provision must also be either:
  - funded directly by ESFA or by ESFA via a local authority
  - otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including Level 3) accredited by Ofqual or pursuant to Section 96 or the Learning and Skills Act 2000

### Section 3: Application and Assessment Procedure

Please use the Vale of Evesham School 16-19 Bursary Fund **Application Form**. If you are applying for the **Guaranteed Bursary Award** you **must be able to provide evidence** that demonstrates you meet the eligibility criteria set out above to receive an award up to £1170 p.a.

If you are applying for a **Discretionary Bursary Award** you **must be able to provide evidence** that demonstrate you are in receipt of a means-tested benefit and/or that you are in financial hardship. We will use our discretion to make awards to students in ways that best fit their needs and circumstances.

**Please note:** the discretionary bursary fund is a finite amount of money and will be distributed according to need in the fairest way possible. The value of any discretionary awards will depend on the total demand on the fund. A portion of the fund will be retained for contingency, i.e. claims later in the year.

#### **Section 4: Payments**

##### **Guaranteed Bursary Awards**

This will be paid regularly at a rate of £30 per week (with the exception of any weeks when agreed criteria have not been met, e.g. attendance).

##### **Discretionary Bursary Awards:**

Those able to demonstrate financial hardship as described above may be granted awards at the school's discretion. The value of any award will be dependent upon numbers of students who apply.

Discretionary bursary recipients may make claims for benefits-in-kind only (not cash). Such benefits might include subsidy of bus passes and transport costs, cost of meals, clothing, trips etc. The funds can be used to pay for the benefit directly or to reimburse an expenditure for which a receipt has been provided. A portion of the fund may be awarded on a discretionary basis to **any** individual student in genuine financial hardship for specific benefits-in-kind.

**Payment of any bursary will be conditional on you maintaining high standards of attendance, achievement, appropriate levels of behaviour, completion of coursework and punctuality.**

To receive bursary payments you must normally have a bank account in your own name that will accept BACS payments (it is not possible to make BACS payments into a post office account). If you do not have a bank account, **you will need to apply to open one.** If there is a delay in setting up a bank account that will result in further financial hardship please discuss with school about whether it is possible to make interim payments.

Books, reference materials and non-consumable equipment funded by the bursary remain the property of Vale of Evesham School and must be returned to the School at the end of the course, or before if you leave early.

Payment of a discretionary bursary is subject to the availability of funds and any bursary awarded to support you whilst you are on a course does not guarantee support for any subsequent courses. You will be required to repay any overpayments resulting from early withdrawal from a course.

#### **Section 5: Record keeping / GDPR**

Staff involved in administering the 16-19 bursary will comply with Vale of Evesham School's policy on the storage and transfer of personal information, and all relevant legislation.

#### **Section 6: Fraudulent Claims**

We must protect public funds from the possibility of fraudulent claims. We ask for detailed information and may invite applicants for interview so we can distribute funds fairly. If your claim is considered fraudulent during our spot checks or auditing processes we will request that the money awarded to you is repaid in full. If you fail to repay your award, we may take court action.

#### **Section 7: Appeals and Complaints**

If your application is unsuccessful you have the right to appeal against the decision; you may also appeal about the amount or type of award by writing to the Headteacher. Your letter should clearly state why you feel the award should be reconsidered. You may be invited to provide additional information or invited to discuss your individual circumstances as part of your appeal.