

## **WEST KIRBY GRAMMAR SCHOOL 16-19 BURSARY POLICY**

### **Introduction**

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is a scheme set up by the government to help the most vulnerable young people aged 16-19 continue in full time education. Its purpose is to provide financial support to help students overcome specific barriers to participation, so that they can remain in education. Full details can be found on the gov.uk website.

### **Categories of Bursary**

There are two types of 16-19 bursary

- Vulnerable Student Bursary

This is a guaranteed bursary of £1200 per year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups.

- Discretionary bursary

This is awarded at the discretion of West Kirby Grammar School based on individual needs to cover specific costs such as transport, books or equipment, and other course costs. West Kirby Grammar School offers two levels of financial support based on household income. The thresholds for determining eligibility to claim are detailed in the eligibility section below.

### **Eligibility**

The basic eligibility requirements of the scheme which are applicable to both vulnerable and discretionary bursaries are

- Age - students must be over 16 and under 19 at 31 August before the academic year in question. If a student turns 19 during their programme of study they can continue to receive the bursary to the end of the academic year in which they turn 19, or to the end of the programme of study, whichever is sooner.
- Residency – students must meet the residency criteria in the EFA funding regulations for post 16 provision. This document sets out the evidence required to confirm eligibility and can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-funding-regulations-for-post-16-provision>

The young person must then also meet the eligibility criteria for the category of bursary they are applying for:

### **Vulnerable Student Bursary**

Students must fall into one of the categories below to be eligible for a vulnerable student bursary

- Young people in care, including unaccompanied asylum seeking children
- Care leavers
- Young people personally in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit
- Disabled young people in receipt of **both** the Employment Support Allowance (ESA) **and** Personal independence Payments (PIP), or Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

The allocation of these funds is subject to audit so West Kirby Grammar School will require evidence that the application is genuine. All information will be treated in confidence (copies of evidence will be retained for a period of 6 years).

Appropriate evidence includes

- A letter setting out the benefit to which the young person is entitled, confirming that the terms of the benefit allow them to participate in further education.
- Written confirmation of the young person's current or previous looked after status from the local authority which looks after them or provides their leaving care services.

### **Discretionary Student Bursary**

Where a student does not meet the vulnerable student criteria, he or she may still be eligible for some support from the Discretionary Fund. West Kirby Grammar School has set two tiers of support based on household income.

- **Tier A** – Students entitled to free school meals and students whose household income is less than £16,190. Where students are applying under the free school meal criteria, the school will need to be satisfied that the application is genuine following the standard procedures that are currently in operation for FSM application. (Students claiming in this category will not normally be eligible to claim bursary funding for meals as they will be entitled to receive a free school meal at school). Where students are applying under the household income criteria the following evidence will be required:
  - A copy of entitlement to means-tested state benefit, P60 or Tax Credit Award Notice confirming household income of less than £16,190
  - Evidence of total household income (including earned and unearned) of less than £16,190
- **Tier B** – where there is a surplus of funds after the allocation to students in tier A, students whose household income is less than £25,000, may apply for a lower level of support. The following evidence will be required for students in this group:

- A copy of entitlement to means-tested state benefit, P60 or Tax Credit Award Notice confirming household income of less than £25,000
- Evidence of total household income (including earned and unearned) of less than £25,000

### **Allocation of Funds**

#### **Vulnerable Student Bursary**

The funding for the vulnerable student bursaries is held centrally by the Student Bursary Support Service. Whenever a new student meeting the criteria is identified West Kirby Grammar School must draw the funding down by completing and submitting a claim form via the SBSS online portal.

<https://studentbursarysupport.education.gov.uk>

#### **Discretionary Bursary**

- 5% of the fund will be held back for administration.
- 10% of the fund will be held back for applicants who join later on in the year or whose personal circumstances change. This contingency fund will be used for students with changed financial circumstances during the year or for those on bursaries in all categories who can evidence a need for emergency funding. All requests will be handled in strictest confidence.

Students applying under Tier A will be assessed individually and awarded a bursary based on their actual financial need, up to a cap of £1000 per annum. If there is still money in the fund after the allocation of funds to Tier A, those applying under Tier B will be assessed individually and awarded a bursary based on actual financial need up to a maximum of £400 per annum. Students allocated to Tier B should complete a DSB Support Request Form with appropriate receipts or alongside their application for a trip when they require funds.

### **Conditions for receipt of student bursaries**

Allocation of funds will be reviewed monthly and students in receipt of funds will have a review with pastoral staff each term (re: their attendance, timekeeping and general conduct). In order for payments to be authorised each month, students must be compliant with the code of conduct and not be subject to a behaviour contract. Upon review each month, students will also be expected to have a good record of behaviour and punctuality, with attendance higher than 95% including no unauthorised absence for the month. Payments will be transferred monthly to the student's bank account upon authorisation that the student has satisfied these requirements. These payments will be made in arrears and in some cases there may be delays if there is a query regarding attendance. If a payment is not made, it is the responsibility of the student to monitor this and seek advice from the Sixth Form Staff.

**Students will be required to inform the school of any changes in their financial circumstances which may affect their eligibility for bursary funding.**

## **Applications**

Application forms are available for download on the school website or they can be collected from Reception on GCSE results day. In September they will also be available from the Director of Sixth Form or Assistant Head of Sixth Form. When completed, forms should be returned to the Finance Office. The deadline for receipt of applications is **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2017**. Although, we will continue to consider applications throughout the year, for those students who may have a change to their circumstances. Funding is not guaranteed by receipt of an application form. Each application will be considered on a case by case basis if eligibility criteria have been met and will be subject to the availability of funds.

## **Assessment**

The Bursary Awards Panel (comprising a representative from Finance, a representative from Sixth Form Management and a member of the Senior Leadership Team) will assess each application with supporting evidence in the strictest confidence.

## **Appeals**

Parents, Carers and Students have the right of appeal to the Bursary Awards Panel if it is felt that a payment has been withheld without justification.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Last Review Date: July 2017

Due for next review: July 2018