

16-19 BURSARY FUND POLICY

RATIONALE:

The 16-19 Bursary Fund exists to help students continue with and complete their course where they would otherwise be prohibited from doing so on financial grounds. This funding, provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, replaces both the Education Maintenance Allowance and the discretionary Learner Support Funding from September 2011 onwards.

PURPOSES:

The Bursary is intended to help with the individual student's needs, as a result of financial hardship. Its intent is to 'enable' a learner to continue with his or her education and should not be viewed as an incentive to attract young people into learning. Generally, awards from the Bursary will be used towards essential course related costs such as books, equipment, travel, field trips, visits and other costs associated with learning. Northallerton School and Sixth Form College will seek to ensure that the funds available are:-

- Distributed fairly through a process which is transparent and easily understood. Information about the process for application and consideration is available on the college website www.northallertonschool.org.uk
- Assessed and allocated to each individual's need, taking into account the financial circumstances of the applicant and the intended use of the award.
- Used to widen access to, and participation in, sixth form education.

16-19 Bursary Funding and the guidance concerning the administrative arrangements, priority groups for support and monitoring arrangements is issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). This gives a broad overview of the Fund on the whole and instructs schools on the appropriate use of the funding.

Please note: there is a limited amount of funding which means that it will not be possible to support every application and priority will be given to those students from the families with the lowest household income and/or highest demonstrated need.

GUIDANCE:

The 16-19 Bursary Fund has two elements:-

1. **Priority Groups**

The following students will be eligible to receive a bursary of up to £1,200 per year, if agreed standards of behaviour and attendance are met:

- Young people who are looked after children in the care of the Local Authority or foster parents.
- Care leavers.
- Those young people who receive Income Support or the equivalent Universal Credit in their own name because they are financially supporting themselves, or supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them, eg a child/partner.
- Disabled young people in receipt of both Employment and Support Allowance (or Universal Credit as a replacement for ESA) and Disability Living Allowance or the new Personal Independence Payment. They must be receiving both benefits in their own right.

Attendance and behaviour standards are in Appendix 1 and align with those expected of all students attending Northallerton School and Sixth Form College.

2. Bursaries for other Young People

These awards will be targeted towards young people facing financial barriers to participation in the sixth form with an annual household income of £35,000 or less. Priority will be given to those young people from the families with the lowest household income. Agreed standards of behaviour and attendance should be met (see Appendix 1).

Application Process

- **Step 1:** Students complete the appropriate assessment forms (Green for Priority Group Bursary; Pink for the Discretionary Bursary) and these should be returned to the Finance Office for confirmation of eligibility.
- **Step 2:** Applicants will be advised as to the outcome of their applications and, if successful, will be invited to meet with the Year Manager/Finance Manager to discuss how best the bursary can meet their needs.
- Successful applicants will either have the books, equipment or other requirements provided by the college or direct payment will be made to the applicant subject to approval.
- Unsuccessful applicants will have the right of appeal.
- **All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.**

Awards Process

Bursary awards are made for specific course related costs and/or other costs viewed as presenting a barrier to the individual learner's participation in education. The amount of each award will be assessed and disbursed on an individual, case by case basis as detailed in the individual's application form.

The college may offer bursaries in the form of non-cash 'in kind' payments where appropriate, such as travel vouchers or meal vouchers, attendance on course related college trips etc. Any equipment purchased by the school for use by an individual learner remains the property of the college and must be returned upon completion of or withdrawal from the course. **Students who meet the criteria for either vulnerable or discretionary bursaries are not automatically entitled to one if they do not have any financial needs and/or their financial needs are covered from other sources.**

The college may also offer an award in the form of a short-term loan to help a learner bridge a temporary financial hardship where this is deemed appropriate and agreed by the learner. In this case, the college will draw up an agreement with the learner clearly stating the use of and the conditions surrounding the reimbursement arrangements which the learner should sign indicating he or she understands the conditions of the loan. The learner should be able to provide evidence that the award has been used as intended.

In line with the 'something for something' ethos, receipt of bursary payments is conditional upon a student meeting attendance and behaviour standards which are agreed in advance and set out in Appendix 1. Where the learner does not meet the agreed attendance or behaviour standards, which will be monitored on a weekly basis, the college will make every effort to advise the learner and help resolve any issues but retains the right to rescind or suspend bursary payment(s).

Appeals Process

Should learners disagree with the outcome of either their application for a bursary award or, where a payment has been withheld due to attendance/behaviour, they should follow the college's complaints procedure (Appendix 2).

APPENDIX 1

The 16-19 Bursary Information for Students

The Government introduced the 16-19 Bursary Fund from September 2011 to help young people who need financial support to enable them to stay on into the sixth form.

Students most in need (Priority Group) have been identified as those in care, care leavers, those receiving income support or the equivalent Universal Credit and disabled young people receiving both Employment and Support Allowance (or Universal Credit as a replacement for ESA) and Disability Living Allowance (or the new Personal Independence Payment). These students are eligible to apply for a bursary of up to £1200 a year, and in order to receive the money will need to meet the required attendance and progress criteria set out by the college and outlined below.

Other students who face financial difficulty are also able to apply for a bursary to go towards costs associated with staying on at college. These may be costs regarding transport, meals whilst at college, trips, books and equipment and paying for examination resits. These payments will only be made providing the student meets the required attendance and progress criteria outlined below.

How to Apply

- If you are a student from the Priority Group you will need to complete the enclosed **green** application form and supply the necessary evidence and documentation as noted on the application form. Please return your application to the Finance Office in school for processing. You will be notified in writing as soon as possible.
- If you want to apply for a bursary on the grounds of financial difficulties, you need to take into account the following:

Is your annual household income less than £35,000?

If yes, please complete the **pink** Financial Assessment Form and supply the necessary financial evidence as noted on the application form. All financial information supplied will remain confidential. The form and evidence should be returned to the Finance Office no later than **the end of September each academic year**. Your application will be means assessed and you will be notified of the outcome in writing by **15th October**. The amount of funds available are likely to be limited and you will be notified of the amount of funds available for you to use during the year, providing you meet the attendance and progress criteria.

Students who meet the criteria for either a vulnerable or discretionary bursary are not automatically entitled to one if they do not have any financial needs and/or their financial needs are covered from other sources.

How will it work?

- If you are eligible for a bursary, you will be contacted by us to assess how best we can assist you. We could purchase equipment on your behalf, transfer funds to pay for trips, issue a meal allowance etc. **Please note that when claiming a reimbursement for items that you have purchased you must produce receipts/evidence for all costs.** Your bursary will be distributed to suit your individual need at the discretion of the school.
- Payments will be made dependant on:
 - you still having available funds in your bursary.
 - you meeting the attendance and progress criteria.
- Each half term you will be given a running balance for your bursary to enable you to keep track of how much money you have spent and the balance remaining.
- If you do not meet the attendance and progress criteria, payment will be withheld pending an investigation by the Director of Post 16.

Attendance and Progress Criteria

In order to be eligible to claim your bursary:

1. Your attendance must not fall below 93% per half term.
2. Your progress will be tracked using the college SP data each half term. You will be expected to demonstrate the appropriate progress and attitude to learning in any assessment period.

APPENDIX 2

Complaints Procedure

RATIONALE:

Governors recognise both their public accountability and the importance of responding to parental concerns swiftly and at an appropriate level, so as not to jeopardise the education of any students involved. Similarly, governors wish to hear the views of members of the public. A clear procedure for handling complaints can reduce tension and avoid the process itself being a cause for complaint.

A copy of the School's Complaints Policy can be found on the school website or you can request a copy from the school office.

Policy Review dates

Review Date	Changes made (Y/N)	By whom	Approved by Governors
New Policy – written July 2011		BH	8 December 2011
July 2012	Y	BH/VH	12/07/2012
July 2013	Y	VH	11/07/2013
June 2014	Y	VH	
June 2015	Y	VH	09/07/2015
June 2016	Y	VH	
June 2017	Y	VH/GI	
June 2018	Y	BH/VH	17/07/2018
June 2019	Y	VH	12/07/2019
July 2020	Y	VH/HW	N/A