



Bursary Fund (16 to 19) Policy

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Version Control

The table below shows the history of the document and the changes that were made at each version:

Date agreed	Summary of changes
30 th October 2025	Updated references to 2025-26 academic year throughout; updated references to DfE following abolition of ESFA.
7 th October 2024	Updated references to 2024-25 academic year throughout; clarified bursary intentions in section 5; clarified maximum awards in section 6.5; updated household income thresholds in section 6.6; added details on self-declarations and removed requirement to review eligibility each year in section 6.6; clarified actions if circumstances change in section 7.1.
9 th November 2021	N/A

1. Aims

Hampstead School aims to:

- have clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of 16 to 19 bursary funds
- make clear to parents/carers and students the type of support which is available and the means of applying for it

- make clear to parents/carers and students the attendance and behaviour conditions for receiving the funds

2. Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund for the 2025-26 academic year

3. Definitions

- 'In care' is defined as: children looked after by a local authority on a voluntary basis (section 20 of the Children Act 1989) or under a care order (section 31 of the Children Act 1989)
- 'Looked after child' is defined as: a child in the care of a local authority or who is provided with accommodation by the authority in the exercise of any functions for more than 24 hours (section 22 of the Children Act 1989)
- 'Care leaver' is defined as:
 - 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

4. Roles & Responsibilities

4.1. The Governing Board

The Governing Board has overall responsibility for approving the Bursary Fund (16 to 19) policy, but has delegated this to the Head. Monitoring the implementation of this policy has then been delegated by the Head to the Director of Sixth Form.

4.2. The Head

The Head is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with this Bursary Fund (16 to 19) policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

4.3. Staff

Staff are responsible for implementing the Bursary Fund (16 to 19) policy consistently. The Director of Sixth Form and other appropriate Sixth Form staff members will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

4.4. Parents/Carers

Parents/cares are expected to notify the Sixth Form staff members of any concerns or queries regarding this Bursary Fund (16 to 19) policy.

5. How we Use the Bursary Fund

Financial support is available to eligible students from the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund. The fund is intended to support students aged 16 to 19 in overcoming specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are two types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- bursaries for defined vulnerable groups; and
- discretionary bursaries

We use the fund to provide students with support to fund:

- transport
- books
- equipment
- field trips and other course-related costs
- the costs of attending university interviews and open days

The Bursary Fund is not intended to provide services such as counselling or mentoring – or to support extra-curricular or non-compulsory activities that are not essential to the students' study programme or to provide living costs support.

6. Eligibility Criteria for 16 to 19 Bursaries

6.1. Age

To be eligible for either bursary in the 2025-26 academic year, students must be at least 16 years old but under 19 years old on 31 August 2025.

Students aged 19 or over are eligible only for a discretionary bursary if they:

- are continuing on a study programme or course which they began when they were aged 16 to 18 years old, or
- have an education, health and care plan (EHCP)

Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for defined vulnerable groups.

In exceptional circumstances, where students under 16 years old are on a funded 16 to 19 study programme at our school, we may use our discretion to pay bursaries to these younger students. However, if these students are enrolled at another institution that receives public funding for them, they will not be eligible for bursary funding.

6.2. Eligible Education Provision

Students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (eg. Ofsted). The provision must also fall into one of these groups:

- be funded directly by the DfE or by the DfE via a local authority
- be funded or co-financed by the European Social Fund
- be otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual or is on the DfE's list of qualifications approved for funding 14 to 19

6.3. Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in the DfE funding regulations for post-16 provision.

6.4. Asylum Seekers

Accompanied asylum seekers under 18 with an adult relative or partner and asylum seekers aged 18 and above are entitled to education but are not entitled to public funds. If necessary, they can apply to the Home Office for suitable housing and cash for essentials.

We will provide in-kind support such as books, equipment and a travel pass to asylum seekers who have not had asylum refused.

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children:

- are the responsibility of the local authority
- are to be treated as 'looked after' children
- are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups, where they have a financial need

When these students reach 18 years old, we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary as a student from a defined vulnerable group if the asylum claim is in their favour and will be treated as a 'care leaver' until they reach the upper age limit.

6.5. Bursaries for Young People in Defined Vulnerable Groups

Students with a financial need, who meet one of the following 4 criteria below, in addition to the criteria outlined in sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 above, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- in care (those who are privately fostered are not classed as looked after);
- care leavers;
- receiving Income Support (IS), or Universal Credit (UC) 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 (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIPs) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right

Students who meet the criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups are not automatically entitled to a bursary. Students will not receive the bursary if they do not have any actual financial need (eg,

because their financial needs are met from other sources and/or because they have no relevant costs).

Where a bursary is provided, the maximum amount of funds that can be awarded is up to £1,200 per year for study programmes lasting 30 weeks or more. This does not mean that students will receive £1,200. When calculating the amount, we will look at cases individually and base the outcome on a particular student's needs. Students will only receive the amount they actually need to participate and will not automatically receive £1,200.

If a student's study programme lasts for less than 30 weeks, they will be paid a pro-rata amount. We will also consider the number of hours involved in a student's study programme when deciding whether a pro-rata payment is more appropriate.

We will review the student's eligibility position each academic year. Students will only continue to receive a bursary for vulnerable groups if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

6.6. Discretionary Bursaries

In addition to the criteria outlined in sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 above, students can apply for a discretionary bursary if they satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

- were in receipt of free school meals in year 11, or during sixth form
- is a young carer
- have a total household income per year of less than £31,200 in year 12
- have a total household income per year that drops below £31,200 in year 13

Following the completion of the bursary application, the relevant evidence (the original documents/not copies) must be presented to the Sixth Form staff members in order for the application to be assessed and processed.

Students in year 13 who received a bursary payment in Year 12 and wish to reapply, should sign a self-declaration form to confirm that their household circumstances have not changed.

- letter from H M Revenue & Customs - Tax Credit Award for current financial year
- current Benefit Letter from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- proof of earnings from Employer - P60 for previous financial year
- self-Assessment Tax Return (if self-employed) for previous financial year
- Universal Credit Monthly Award Notices for last three months
- confirmation letter from Local Authority of current or recent looked after status (vulnerable group)
- other confirmation of income

Students who do not satisfy any of the criteria listed in this section, but who are able to demonstrate financial hardship arising from other reasons, may apply for a discretionary bursary.

In assessing any application for a discretionary bursary, we will consider:

- level of household income

- distance to travel between the student's home and the institution, or a location for a placement
- the number of dependent children in the student's household
- the requirements of their study programme
- whether the student has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help

There is no set limit for the amount of discretionary bursary that can be awarded to students. We will base all decisions around which students receive a discretionary bursary, and how much bursary they receive, on each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need.

Students will only continue to receive a discretionary bursary if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

6.7. Evidence

All applications for 16 to 19 bursaries must be supported by appropriate evidence. Examples of acceptable evidence we may request are:

- previous 3 to 6 months' worth of payslips
- P60 for previous financial year
- written confirmation of a student's current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority; and/or
- written confirmation of a benefit award or tax credit notice, in the name of the student (for either bursary) or the parent (for the discretionary bursary – see 6.6)

7. Application & Payment Process

7.1. Applications

Applications should be submitted via Applicaa to allow enough time for the school to assess the overall level of demand and make discretionary awards on a fair basis. This date will be clearly stated on the online application form.

Students' whose circumstances change throughout the school year should speak to the Sixth Form staff members about any support that may be available.

Applicants will be notified in writing via email whether their application has been successful, together with the amount of funding awarded. If a student wishes to appeal the outcome of their application for a bursary, they must follow the school's complaints procedure.

7.2. Payment Process

Payments are made using the following process:

- payments in Amazon vouchers paid to the student
- in-kind payments, eg. travel passes, books, equipment or vouchers for meals
- termly BACS payments into student's bank account to supplement the above payments

7.3. Conditions for the Receipt of Bursary Payments

Payments of the bursary are conditional on students meeting the following conditions in relation to their standards of attendance and behaviour:

- attendance above 96% to all sessions, including registration and all timetabled lessons (subject to exceptional circumstances, which must be evidenced, eg. an appointment card must be provided for an emergency medical appointment)
- 100% punctuality
- meeting the expectations laid out in the Sixth Form Home School Agreement

All students are required to agree to the requirements of the Bursary Fund Contract confirming that they agree to these conditions.

Students who fail to meet these conditions may have their payment withheld, but we will always take students' individual circumstances into consideration. This includes considering the impact on attendance that might be caused by illness, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances.

We will stop payments where students fail to meet the expectations detailed above.

We reserve the right to take back money from students where it is not spent for the reasons it was awarded.

We will consider the impact of such an action on the individual student before taking a final decision to do so, and any decision will be confirmed to the student in writing.

Bursaries will not be awarded if funds are exhausted.

8. Change in Circumstances

If there are changes in circumstances which may affect eligibility for a bursary, applicants and/or parents/carers must notify the school without delay.

9. Record Keeping

Any paperwork and documents we retain for audit purposes (for example, copies of application forms, household income evidence and any agreements signed by students) will be kept securely in line with our data protection policy, privacy notices and record retention schedule.

Policy Consultation & Review

This policy is available on our school website and available on request from the Administration Office.

This policy was last reviewed by the Head on Thursday 30th October 2025. This policy will be reviewed by the Director of Sixth Form on an annual basis. It is due to be reviewed again in the academic year 2025-26.