



# **16-19 BURSARY POLICY**

## **2021-2022**

**Information for students,  
parents/carers and staff**

## 1. Overview of the 16-19 Bursary Fund

The 16-19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are two types of 16-19 bursaries:

- A vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups
- Discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment.

The Girls' Learning Trust (the 'Trust'), together with the Local Governing Bodies of Nonsuch High School for Girls (NHSG), Wallington High School for Girls (WHSG) and Carshalton High School for Girls (CHSG) (the 'Schools'), is responsible for managing both types of bursary.

Funding is provided by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the School is regulated by the ESFA in the administration of these benefits. The 16-19 Bursary Fund Guide: 2021 to 2022 academic year sets out the guidelines for institutions and can be found here:

[16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide 2021 to 2022 academic year - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2021-to-2022-academic-year)

Further information for students can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

**Please note that the guidance above has changed for 2021/2022 and as a consequence, schools are encouraged to pay bursaries in kind. Block, blanket or flat rate payments are not permitted – any bursary award should reflect the actual costs the student has.**

## 2. Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a 16-19 Bursary a student must satisfy all the following criteria:

- i. be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31st August in the academic year in which they start their programme of study. However, you can apply to a discretionary bursary if you're over 19 and either:
  - continuing on a course you started aged 16 to 18 (known as being a '19+ continuer')
  - have an [Education, Health and Care Plan \(EHCP\)](#)
- ii. satisfy the Educational Funding Agency (EFA) residency criteria for post 16 education
- iii. be participating in an educational course provided by the Trust
- iv. have financial needs (see section 5 below) to enable them to participate in education, which cannot be met by household or other third-party income.

## 3. Levels of 16-19 Bursary payment

### 3.1. Level One: Vulnerable Students

Up to £1,200 per year if a student is in one of the following defined vulnerable groups:

- in care
- care leavers
- in receipt of Income Support, or Universal Credit in their own right because they are financially supporting themselves or themselves and someone who is dependent on them e.g. child, partner

- in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit in their own right.

Students will only receive the funding they actually need to participate in education (see section 5 below) and this will be paid in kind where possible. Funding will be pro-rata for those on part time study programmes. Where a student has no financial needs or these are met by a third party, the Schools may refuse the student's application for a Level One bursary.

For vulnerable bursaries, the Schools will draw down funding (by submitting a funding claim) from the Student Bursary Support Service (SBSS) when they have identified students who meet the vulnerable bursary criteria.

The Schools may pay a vulnerable student more than £1,200 if they assess they need extra help to remain in education. Any payments over the £1,200 must be paid from the Schools' discretionary bursary allocation or from their own funds.

### 3.2 Level Two: Discretionary Bursary

**For Discretionary Bursaries, the level of funding per year is dependent on the funds available and the number of students eligible. It will therefore vary from year to year.**

This bursary will be available to students with an 'identifiable financial need' who do not fall into Level One above. Due to the limited funds available, priority will be given to those whose household income is below £25,000 and have the greatest need.

Students may apply for funds for specific educational purposes (see section 5 below), in consultation with their subject teachers and Head of Department. The Bursary Panel will assess each claim individually and authorise funding.

Students will only receive the funding they actually need to participate in education (see section 5 below) and this will be paid 'in kind' where possible. Where a student has no financial needs or these are met by a third party, the Schools may refuse the student's application for a Discretionary Bursary.

## 4. Conditions

Students must also satisfy the following conditions, at the discretion of the Schools:

- The student's level of unauthorised and unexplained absence from all lessons in the previous year must be no greater than 5%. The Schools reserve the right to withdraw funding if attendance falls below 95%;
- Prolonged absence must be supported by medical evidence (if attendance falls below 95%);
- The student must be up-to-date with all work commitments;
- The student must not have broken the terms of the Sixth Form Agreement/Contract.

Students must inform the Headteacher in writing of any changes to their personal or financial circumstances.

## 5. Specific Educational Purposes

The purpose of the 16-19 Bursary is to address financial difficulties in accessing education in the Sixth Form. **Applicants must specify on their Application Forms what they want to use the bursary funding for. (This is very important as this information will be used to allocate funds).**

Examples of what this might include can be found on the next page:

- Transport costs for getting to/from school
- Essential books and equipment relevant to the courses being studied and not already provided
- Educational trips necessary for the curriculum being studied.
- Costs of clothing to meet the Sixth Form dress code and/or specialist clothing
- Meals (note: those eligible for Free School Meals will have this funded separately)
- Travel to university open days, or similar events
- Fees for university entrance tests, such as Bio Medical Admissions Test (BMAT), UK Clinical Aptitude Test (UKCAT) and similar entrance tests

Please note that funding will be provided 'in-kind' rather than payment into your bank account (see section 7 below). In exceptional circumstances, where the latter is necessary, students must retain copies of receipts to evidence the proper use of bursary funds in accordance with the specific educational purposes. Spot checks may be undertaken by members of the Trust/School staff from time-to-time.

## 6. Application Process

### All applications are made in the strictest confidence

#### 6.1. Timing

Students should apply for a 16-19 Bursary as soon as possible after admission in September. The deadline (autumn term) for receipt of applications for 2021/22 school year is the **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021** and the Bursary Panel will aim to sit just before the October half term. Anyone in need of urgent funding prior to this should speak to their Head of 6<sup>th</sup> Form in confidence.

Applications received later in the academic year will be reviewed subsequently, and subject to remaining funds being available. The 16-19 Bursary is funded every year via the Education Funding Agency. Once the funding has been allocated during the year, the Schools will not be able to make any further grants until new funding is received in the new academic year.

#### 6.2 Application Forms & Supporting Documentation

Applicants should complete the 16-19 Bursary Application Forms. The Application Form comprises of 4 sections that are required for every application:

1. Learner Information
2. Financial Support Requested
3. Level of Funding Sought
4. Parent/Carer Information

**It is important that the student fills in Part 2 of the Application Form 'Financial Support Requested' in detail and specifies the proposed use of the funds. If unsure, students should ask their subject teacher or head of year. If necessary, the School may request a meeting with a student to ensure they have included everything they need. Where possible, the Schools will organise the direct purchase of items requested. In exceptional circumstances, where expenses can only be incurred by the student, arrangements will be put in place for payments direct to the student's bank account, see 7.3 below.**

#### 6.3. Supporting Documentation

**Supporting documentation must be provided to establish financial need**, as set out in the Application Forms. Students are required to sign section 1 for all applications and parents/carers are required to sign section 4 when a Discretionary Bursary is applied for. Students and parents should be aware that if false or incomplete information is submitted, or if they do not tell us about any part of their income

that is relevant, the matter may be referred to the Department for Education or the police. The student could face prosecution and we will seek to recover any payments for which the student is not eligible.

#### **6.4 Submitting the Application Form & Supporting Documentation**

Forms should be submitted to the **Sixth Form Office**, marked '**For the attention of the Headteacher – 16-19 Bursary**'.

#### **6.5 Decision**

The Bursary Panel will review all applications and determine the eligibility (or otherwise) of applications and the Level and value of any award to be made. Students will be notified as soon as possible, this is likely to be just after the October half term.

### **7. Requests for Bursary Funds**

**Once a student has been notified that their application has been successful, they may access the funds as indicated below. There will be no routine payments into students' bank accounts**

#### **7.1. Requests for items e.g. books, travel cards**

Most Bursary funding will be distributed 'in kind' i.e. the school will purchase the items required on the student's behalf. To obtain such items the student should provide as much detail as possible on their application form and email the finance office at [bursary@girlslearningtrust.org](mailto:bursary@girlslearningtrust.org) when required. Providing the student still has Bursary funds available and the item was agreed at the time of application, the finance office will then 'order' the item by raising a requisition on the Trust finance portal. The item will be delivered to the student's School for the attention of the 6<sup>th</sup> form administrator, where the student can collect it. Students should note that the school will usually purchase items from an existing supplier to obtain best value.

#### **7.2. Requests for services e.g. lunches**

These items should be requested by emailing the finance office at [bursary@girlslearningtrust.org](mailto:bursary@girlslearningtrust.org) as 7.1 above. Lunches or other Parentpay services will be added to the student's Parentpay account from their Bursary 'pot' by the finance office.

#### **7.3. Requests for reimbursement/cash advance**

These requests will only be considered in very unusual circumstances and students must obtain prior authorisation from the finance office before making any purchases with their own money. As 7.1 above, requests should be emailed to the finance office at [bursary@girlslearningtrust.org](mailto:bursary@girlslearningtrust.org). Once authorisation has been received, students should provide receipts to show proof of expenditure. The finance office will then arrange payment into the student's bank account.

### **8. Bursary Panel & Appeals**

#### **8.1. Bursary Panel**

The Bursary Panel is responsible for deciding who receives the awards based on the criteria outlined. The Panel is established by the Headteacher of each School, and will comprise at least 3 of the following:

- Headteacher
- Assistant Headteacher (Director of Sixth Form)
- Assistant Headteacher (Student Welfare)

- Director of Finance & Operations or representative
- Inclusion/Finance Support Staff (in attendance)

## **8.2 Appeals**

Appeals relating to any 16-19 Bursary matters should be made to the Bursary Panel and addressed to the Headteacher in the first instance.

Further appeals should be made using the Trust Complaints Policy (available from the school website).

## **9. Exceptional Circumstances**

The Trust and the Schools recognise that they cannot cover every eventuality in this procedure. Therefore, in exceptional circumstances, students and parents/carers may apply in writing to the Headteacher for a discretionary bursary, outlining the specific circumstances with supporting documentation. A decision will be taken by the Bursary Panel, at the sole discretion of the School and will be dependent on funds being available.