

Bursary 16-19 Fund Policy

Stroud High School

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PURPOSE

BACKGROUND

The fund's aim is to provide support for Sixth Form students who face financial hardship. From September 2022, the way funds are allocated has been amended. This Policy is based on advice provided by the Government and sets out how Stroud High School will distribute the funds.

GUIDELINES

1. WHAT IS THE 16 to 19 BURSARY FUND?

The 16-19 Bursary fund is made available from the Government, to provide assistance to students whose access to, or completion of, education is inhibited by financial constraints or barriers.

2. ELIGIBILITY

2.1. Who is eligible to apply for 16-19 Bursary Funding?

Students following Government funded full-time or part-time courses, who are 16 years and over, and under 19 on 31st August in the academic year in which they start their programme of study, who fulfil the residency criteria in the *EFA Funding Guidance for 2024/25*¹ To be eligible for funding, you must show evidence that you satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

- Being a young person in care.
- Being a care leaver.
- Being in direct receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit.
- Being a disabled young person in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payment).
- Being in receipt of Free School Meals.
- Providing evidence of financial hardship.

2.2. Who is not eligible for 16 to 19 Bursary Funding?

- Students under 16 years of age or over 19 years of age on 31st August 2024.
- Students who do not meet the residency qualifications.

3. WHAT CAN I SPEND MY BURSARY ON?

The bursary can be spent on anything which will be beneficial to your education. This could include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Text books or other books and equipment related to your subjects
- School resources deposit
- Stationery / revision aids
- Laptop, tablet, printer, ink etc
- School trips and visits
- School lunches (money will be added to your cashless catering account for use in the canteen)
- Transport costs – bus or train fares
- Transport for university/job interviews
- Exam fees

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2024-to-2025-academic-year/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2024-to-2025-academic-year>

If you are unsure if something could be included or not, please ask either at the Finance Office or contact Miss Patel in Sixth Form.

3.1. How do I spend my bursary?

There are three ways to spend your bursary:

- **Buy/pay for the item yourself and reclaim the funds from your bursary.** Complete the "Bursary Reimbursement Form" and hand it into the Finance Office who will process a refund into your bank account within a week. Remember to check before you buy your item that it is included in the list of approved items.
- **Ask the school to order the item for you and pay for it directly from your bursary.** Complete the "Bursary Order Form" and hand in to the Finance Office. The order will be placed and you will be contacted via your school email account when the item is available to collect.
- **Petty cash - For items under £20 claim cash.** Complete the "petty cash form" attach your receipt(s) and bring to the Finance Office to claim cash back immediately.
- **School lunches.** We will add money to your cashless catering account for you at the beginning of each week (max £2.50 per day or £12.50 per week). Email the Finance Office on finance@stroudhigh.gloucs.sch.uk BEFORE breaktime with your name and the amount you would like added and that will be available by lunchtime.

All of these forms are available to download on the school website or to collect from either the Finance Office or Sixth Form reception.

4. APPLICATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

4.1 How does the school assess applications and allocate 16 to 19 Bursary Funding?

Stroud High School will make every effort to ensure that all those entitled to bursaries receive such support. All students entering Sixth Form will receive information regarding the Bursary. Sixth Form students will be entitled to apply if they consider themselves eligible. Parents / Carers will be asked to provide evidence of household income as set out in the application form.

The 16 - 19 Bursary Fund is a limited fund. The school will prioritise allocation. There will be five priority groups, categorised as Level 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Applications cannot be made until a sixth form place has been confirmed and the student has commenced their studies as a Post 16 student.

All applications should be received via your tutor to Miss Patel (Head of Sixth Form). Applications will be accepted throughout the year to allow for changes in students' family income.

However, given the limited nature of the funding it cannot be guaranteed that in-year applications will all be successful. It is in the student's interest to apply promptly at the start of the year.

An application will not be assessed unless it contains full details including documentary evidence of household income.

Funding Levels

4.2 Level 1 funding

Students aged over 16 and under 19 on 31st August 2024, and who fall into one of the following categories:

- Are currently in care (as defined by Social Services)
- Are leaving or have recently left care
- Are in receipt of Income Support (or Universal Credit) in their own name
- Are disabled and in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payments).

Eligible students will be guaranteed a **£1200 Bursary** to support with costs such as public transport, equipment, trips, school meals, books, etc.

4.3 Level 2 funding

Students aged over 16 and under 19 on 31st August 2024, and:

- Have a gross annual household income of below £16,190 and
- Are eligible for Free School Meals.

Eligible students in this group will be entitled for funding (amount dependant on the number of eligible applications) to contribute towards the cost of transport, essential course equipment, trips, materials, books etc. up to a **value of £900** per year.

4.4 Level 3 funding

Students aged over 16 and under 19 on 31st August 2024, and:

- Have a gross annual household income below £16,190

Each application will be considered according to individual circumstances.

Eligible students in this group, will be eligible for funding (amount dependant on the number of eligible applications) to contribute towards the cost of public transport, essential course equipment, trips, materials, books etc. up to a **value of £900** per year.

Those in the Level 3 funding group will be eligible for funding based on the school allocation and subject to available funding.

4.5 Level 4 funding

Students aged over 16 and under 19 on 31st August 2024, and:

- Have a gross annual household income between £16,191 and £22,500.

Each application will be considered according to individual circumstances.

Eligible students in this group, will be eligible for funding (amount dependant on the number of eligible applications) to contribute towards the cost of public transport, essential course equipment, trips, materials, books etc. up to a **value of £600** per year.

Those in the Level 4 funding group will be eligible for funding based on the school allocation and subject to available funding.

4.6 Level 5 funding

Students aged over 16 and under 19 on 31st August 2024, and:

- Have a gross annual household income below £28,000.

Each application will be considered according to individual circumstances.

Eligible students in this group, will be eligible for funding (amount dependant on the number of eligible applications) to contribute towards the cost of public transport, essential course equipment, trips, materials, books etc. up to a **value of £400** per year.

Those in the Level 5 funding group will be eligible for funding based on the school allocation and subject to available funding.

5. DISCRETIONARY BURSARY

Parents/Carers/Students may approach the school for assistance at any time in case of hardship (including sudden or temporary circumstances); these cases will be dealt with on a case by case basis. Please contact either Miss Ria Patel (Head of Sixth Form) or your tutor in confidence.

6. CONDITIONS

Please note:

- The School reserves the right to stop payments immediately should a student's behaviour become unacceptable. Payments will be made at the end of each period following analysis of the previous period's data for attendance and behaviour.
- The School can request a full refund of any payments made should the student leave prior to the end of their studies.
- Funds are limited and will be allocated based only on the criteria above.
- Applications must be supported with official proof of household income. We will accept the following as proof of total household income:
 - 3 most recent months Universal Credit award notices
 - Tax Credit Award Notification
 - P60s from each and every job
 - Certified evidence of self-employment income from the Inland Revenue
 - Free School Meal eligibility.
 - If none of the above is available, 3-6 months of bank statements may be considered.
- Reimbursements must be supported with documentary evidence of costs incurred e.g. receipts of purchase.

- Books and equipment purchased under the bursary scheme must be returned to the school at the end of your course to enable them to be reused by other students.
- Students must sign and return a declaration form (provided by the school) to confirm that the bursary will be used to support curriculum activities and resources.

If documentary evidence is not available please contact Miss Patel to discuss possible alternative evidence options. Where relevant, it is possible to attach a letter outlining any special circumstances that may apply to an individual's situation.

7. PAYMENTS

See the Guidelines and Criteria for payment of the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

8. APPEALS

Students are entitled to appeal against the decision made in relation to their application for a Bursary or the withholding of payments. Students should write a letter of appeal to Miss Patel. This will be forwarded for consideration by the Appeal Panel of the school. The Appeal Panel consists of Ria Patel: Head of Sixth Form, Sandra Thomson: Business Manager, and a school governor.

9. FRAUD

Applicants' parents are responsible for providing true, accurate and complete information on total household income, and any other information that is relevant to their claim for financial support. Fraudulent claims for Bursary allocations will be treated very seriously. Students found to make fraudulent claims will be required to refund all payments and the police will be informed.

10. NOTES

This information is subject to final Government decision and the details may change.

Updated information, as it becomes available, will be posted on the school's website.

If you think you may be eligible for a bursary then it is wise to ensure that you have opened your own Bank or Building Society Account that can receive direct payments into it.

Please return the completed application form and a signed learning agreement to: Miss Ria Patel (Head of Sixth Form), Stroud High School, Beards Lane, Stroud, Glos, GL5 4HF

Please retain these guidance notes for your records.

For advice speak to your tutor or the school Finance Office.

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