



# The Chalfonts Community College

## 16 to 19 Bursary Fund Policy

### 2023-2025

<b>Approved by:</b>	QFL Committee	<b>Date:</b> 7 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
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# Contents

1. Aims.....	3
2. Guidance .....	3
3. Definitions .....	3
4. Roles and responsibilities .....	3
5. How we use the bursary fund .....	4
6. Eligibility criteria for the 16 to 19 bursaries .....	4
7. Application and payment process .....	7
8. Change in circumstances .....	8
9. Record keeping .....	8
10. Monitoring arrangements.....	8

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## 1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of 16 to 19 bursary funds
- Make clear to parents and students the type of support which is available and the means of applying for it
- Make clear to parents and students the attendance and behaviour conditions for receiving the funds

## 2. Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on the [16 to 19 bursary fund for the 2023 to 2024 academic year](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 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 and responsibilities

### 4.1 The governing board

The governing board has overall responsibility for approving this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the Principal.

The governing board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

In our school, responsibility for approving and monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the Quality for Learning Committee.

### 4.2 The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

### **4.3 Staff**

Our staff are responsible for implementing this 16 to 19 bursary fund policies consistently.

The senior leadership team will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

### **4.4 Parents**

Parents are expected to notify staff or the Principal of any concerns or queries regarding this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy.

## **5. How we use the bursary fund**

Financial support is available to eligible students from the 16 to 19 bursary fund. See section 6 below for details of our eligibility criteria.

The fund is intended to support student's 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

## **6. Eligibility criteria for the 16 to 19 bursaries**

### **6.1 Age**

To be eligible for either bursary in the 2023 to 2024 academic year, students must be at least 16 years old but under 19 years old on 31 August 2023.

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 (EHC) plan

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 funded directly by ESFA and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual or is on the ESFA's list of qualifications approved for funding 14 to 19.

## 6.3 Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in the [ESFA 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; and
- 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 students 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 (NB: 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 (for example, because their financial needs are met from other sources and/or because they have no relevant costs).

Where a bursary is provided for a student in a defined vulnerable group, the funds will generally be up to £1,200 per year for study programmes lasting 30 weeks or more. 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 they do not need the full amount.

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:

- You have a gross annual household income of £20,000 or below

And/or

- You are in receipt of Free School Meals

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

The requirements of their study programme

Whether the student has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is a limited fund and the school will prioritise allocation. There is no minimum amount or 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, their actual financial need and subject to available funding after bursaries to student in defined vulnerable groups (Section 6.5) have been awarded.

We will review the student's eligibility position each academic year. 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:

- Certified letter from the LA regarding Free School Meals
- Certified letter from DWP
- Previous 3 to 6 months' worth of pay slips;
- P60 (additional evidence will also be required);
- 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)

## **7. Application and payment process**

### **7.1 Applications**

Applications should ideally be submitted by 15 September to allow enough time for our school to assess the overall level of demand and make discretionary awards on a fair basis. However, we acknowledge that students' circumstances may change and therefore the application process will remain open for the whole school year.

Applicants will be notified in writing (either via email or via letter) 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.

The Bursary Fund Committee will normally meet three times per year (September, January and May) to consider and review applications. Emergency meetings may also need to be called.

- The Bursary Fund Committee will be made up of the Principal (Chair), the Director of Finance and Operations and a Governor (excluding any governor making an application for their own child or who is the parent of a student in Chalfonts Community College Sixth Form).
- The Leader for the Sixth Form does not make decisions about applications but may offer information to the Committee about a student's circumstances, well-being, behaviour, progress and attendance.

### **7.2 Payment process**

Payments will be made on a termly basis (i.e. 3 times per year).

Payments will be subject to review by the Bursary Fund Committee. Payments are made directly to students via their own bank account.

### **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 of at least 85% (subject to exceptional circumstances)
- Complying with the 6<sup>th</sup> Form Code of Conduct

All students are required to sign a declaration 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 have been absent for a period of 4 continuous weeks or more (excluding holidays) and where students have decided to withdraw from a study programme.

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.

## **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.

## **10. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed by Principal every 2 years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Quality for Learning Committee.