Presdales School

16-19 Bursary Policy

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1. Aims

Presdales 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 that 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 Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on the 16-19 Bursary Fund Guide which can be found on the GOV.UK website:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guidance

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 been 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. Responsibilities

- Presdales School is responsible for setting eligibility criteria for students at the institution.
- Arrangements for applying for bursaries will be straightforward and confidential
- Each student who applies for the bursary will be assessed by Presdales School and evidence may be obtained to support each application
- The school's preference is to make bursary payments in-kind rather than to give money directly. This could be by buying items for students such as books, equipment, revision

materials and a contribution towards the cost of trips that are essential to the student's A Level course.

- Parents/Carers are expected to notify Presdales 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; details of our eligibility criteria are set out later in this document.

The fund is intended to support students aged 16 to 19 in overcoming specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education. Funding is limited and is based on funds allocated by the ESFA (Education & Skills Funding Agency).

There are 2 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:

- Books
- Equipment
- Field trips and other course-related costs
- The costs of attending university interviews and open days
- If we have sufficient funding, we will try to help with travel costs

6. Eligibility criteria for the 16 to 19 bursaries

To be eligible for either bursary, students must:

- be at least 16 years old but under 19 years old on 31 August in the academic year in which they start their programme of study.
- be undertaking a full-time course at Presdales School funded by the ESFA
- meet the residency criteria in ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision

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

- are continuing on a study programme or course that 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.

Bursaries for Vulnerable Groups

Students who meet the criteria, and who have a financial need, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups. The defined groups reflect that these students are unlikely to be receiving financial assistance from parents or carers, so may need a greater level of support to enable them to continue to participate. 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

UC has now replaced IS, as well as other benefits above, for current and future young people aged 16 to 18. However, students aged 19 to 25 and funded from the 16 to 19 budget (19+ continuers and students with an EHC plan) may still receive the legacy benefits listed above.

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, the funds will generally be up to £1,200 per year for study programmes lasting 30 weeks or more. When calculating the amount, cases will be looked at individually and the outcome based 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.

We can use our discretion, on a case-by-case basis, and provide more than £1,200 per year if such would be necessary in all the circumstances for the student to remain in education. Any such additional payment will be paid either from our discretionary bursary allocation or our own funds.

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.

We will provide this support for students from the bursary fund by making payments in kind where possible. It will not be provided as regular payments for living costs.

Discretionary bursaries

Presdales School may make discretionary bursary awards to help students to buy essential books, equipment or specialist clothing (such as protective overalls, for example) and to pay for trips that are a compulsory part of the student's A Level course. The School may also help with fees for

university applications, travel costs for visits to universities, or Post 18 Job/Apprenticeship interviews.

The bursary fund is not intended to provide learning support - services that institutions give to students - for example, counselling or mentoring, or to support extra-curricular activities where these are not essential to the students' study programme. In keeping with the current practice of financial support for school activities, Presdales School may provide bursaries to support students' costs for those whose parents are entitled to any of the following state benefits:

- Free school meals
- Income Support/Universal Credit
- Income based jobseekers allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided the parent is not entitled to Working Tax Credit
- Be able to demonstrate unexpected need due to change in financial circumstances
- Level of household income

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.

Evidence

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

- A copy of the UC or IS award notice, in the student's name
- Documents such as a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, birth certificate or utility bills
- Written confirmation of the student's current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority
- A copy of the UC claim from Department of Work and Pensions

7. Application and payment process

Applications should ideally be submitted early in the Autumn term 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.

Application forms are available on our website or from the Sixth Form Administrator. The form is also given to every Year 12 student as part of their Sixth Form Information Pack at the start of the Autumn term in Year 12.

Parents and students should complete the form and submit it to The Business Manager together with any supporting evidence.

Applicants will be notified in writing by email whether their application has been successful. If a student wishes to appeal the outcome of their application for a bursary, they should submit their appeal in writing to The Business Manager.

If a student believes they may be eligible to receive 16-19 Bursary funding, they should retain receipts for books and equipment purchased and submit them for reimbursement, once approval has been granted.

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Entitlement expectations

Students will be expected to sign a 16-19 Bursary Agreement that outlines the expectations Presdales School has with regard to attendance and standards of behaviour. Students eligible for the 16-19 Bursary must meet the criterion of 100% attendance, unless absence is authorised.

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 that 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, documents as 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. Unspent funds

Funding for discretionary bursary funding cannot be carried forward for more than 1 year. Unspent funding must be reported to the ESFA specifying the amount of funding and the year/s it relates to, no later than 31 March each year. The ESFA will recover all unspent funds.