



Mayfield Grammar School Gravesend

A Specialist Science and Language College
Pelham Road, Gravesend, Kent, DA11 0JE
Telephone: 01474 352896 Fax: 01474 331195
Website: www.mgsg.kent.sch.uk Email: enquiries@mgsg.kent.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mrs E Wilson B.A. (Hons)

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1914-2014

16 to 19 Bursary Fund 2023 to 2024 academic year

Dear Students/Parents/Carers,

16 to 19 Bursary Fund: A Summary

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome any specific education related costs which otherwise may cause a barrier to their education.

A bursary is money that you, or the school, can use to assist with the costs of:

- clothing, books and other equipment for your course
- transport to attend school

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- bursaries for defined vulnerable groups of up to £1,200 a year
- discretionary bursaries which the school can award using set policies, in line with government funding rules.

It should be noted that receipt of bursary funding does not affect receipt of other means-tested benefits paid to families such as Universal Credit or Child Benefit.

The bursary fund is not intended to support costs not related to education, extra-curricular activities or provide learning support, such as counselling, mentoring or extra tuition.

Eligibility criteria: All bursaries

Students must meet the age and residency criteria to be eligible for help from the bursary fund.

Age

A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2023 to be eligible for help from the bursary fund in the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers') or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

These 2 groups of aged 19+ students can receive a discretionary bursary while they continue to attend education (in the case of a 19+ continuer, this must be the same programme they started before they turned 19), as long as their eligibility continues and their institution considers they need the support to continue their participation.

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

Students aged under 19 enrolled on higher education qualifications are not eligible for support.

Residency

Students must prove UK residency.

For full details on the evidence schools must see and retain for eligibility for the bursary funding, you can follow the link below. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-funding-regulations-for-post-16-provision>

Eligibility criteria: Discretionary bursaries

Institutions can make discretionary bursary awards to help students with the cost of travel, to buy essential books, equipment or specialist clothing. These are items the student would otherwise need to pay for in order to participate.

The school will base all decisions about which students receive a discretionary bursary and how much bursary they receive on a student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need. These will vary from student to student, depending on, for example, their household income, the distance they need to travel to school and the requirements of their course.

Using household income and establishing individual student need

The bursary amount awarded will be dependent on an assessment of the student's actual financial needs. To be able to make an application for this funding, students will have to prove that they meet some or all of the following criteria in the form of appropriate supporting documentation:

- that their parent(s)/carer(s) are on Universal credit or other means tested benefits and the total family income for the last financial tax year
- that they fulfil UK residency conditions
- that they were eligible for free school meals in Year 11

Paying bursary funding to eligible students

ESFA encourages the school to pay bursaries in-kind rather than cash as far as possible. This helps ensure that the bursary is spent for the reasons it was awarded. In-kind payments can include travel passes, vouchers or credits for meals, required books and required equipment.

We can insist that students only spend the bursary payments they have made to them on the support that has been identified as necessary to help them participate in education. This means they can specify students can only use the funds to pay for travel costs and/or a meal during the day, to buy equipment or any other support that has been agreed.

The school can 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 may also take money back from students if they have not spent it for the reasons it was awarded to them.

Vulnerable groups

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- in care
- care leavers
- receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit 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

- receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right

Schools may decide that although a young person may be eligible for a bursary because they are in one or more of the defined vulnerable groups, they do not have any actual financial need. This might be because their financial needs are already met and/or because they have no relevant costs. Institutions can refuse a student's application on this basis. Similarly, students should only receive the amount they actually need to participate, and the school should not automatically award students £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

Equally, institutions can pay a bursary to a vulnerable group student of more than £1,200 if they assess they need extra help to remain in education. Any payments over £1,200 must be paid from their discretionary bursary allocation or from their own funds.

Defining in care and care leavers

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund defines 'in care' 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) - Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 defines the term 'looked after child'.'

A '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

Foster care, including privately arranged foster care

A young person placed with a foster carer by the local authority, including where the foster carer is on the books of an independent fostering agency, is classed as looked after. They meet the criteria for the 'in care' vulnerable group where they need financial support to participate.

A child who is privately fostered (in other words, a private arrangement is made between the parent and the person who will care for the child) is not classed as a looked after child and is not eligible for the bursary for vulnerable groups.

In some instances, a young person may have been in the care of the local authority and the care transferred to another party via a permanent form of fostering such as a Special Guardianship Order. In these circumstances, the young person is defined as having left care so is now a care leaver. They must meet the definition of a 'care leaver' in full (so, the period of weeks and age range set out above). If they do, they are eligible for help from the bursary for vulnerable groups, where they need financial support to participate.

Universal Credit

UC award notifications do not include any information on the benefits they replace. For this reason, the description of the bursaries for vulnerable group category that relates to receipt of UC or Income Support is that a student must be receiving UC in their own right because they are financially supporting themselves and anyone who is dependent on them and living with them such as a child or partner.

Evidence of eligibility

The school must obtain proof that students meet the criteria for the bursary for vulnerable groups in full. In other words, that they are in receipt of the specified benefits in their own name or that they fully meet the definitions for in care/care leavers. Institutions should ask for evidence from each student and retain copies for audit purposes. For example:

- for students who are in care or a care leaver, written confirmation of their current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority - this is the local authority that looks after them or provides their

leaving care services. The evidence could be a letter or an email but must be clearly from the local authority

- for students in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit (UC), a copy of their Income Support or UC award notice. This must clearly state that the claim is in the student's name/confirm they are entitled to the benefits in their own right. The evidence must not state any conditions that prevent them from participating in further education or training. For students in receipt of UC, institutions must also see a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificates, utility bills and so on
- for students receiving UC/ESA and Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments, a copy of their UC claim from DWP. Evidence of receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment must also be provided

UC claimants should be able to print off details of their award from their online account.

16 to 19 Bursary Fund and receipt of DWP benefits

Receipt of bursary funding **does not affect receipt of other means-tested benefits** paid to families, such as Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Child Benefit, Working Tax Credit, Housing Benefit or, generally, Universal Credit.

To continue to receive a Bursary throughout the year, students must satisfy the following conditions:

- Attendance: minimum of 97%, except for those who develop serious medical difficulties and then subject to medical certification;
- Punctuality: to all lessons, being ready to start on time; Students that are late more than twice in one week may lose that current instalment of the bursary.
- Behaviour: students must conform to the School's Code of Conduct;
- Standards of work: students must meet or be actively working towards their agreed targets.

In the event of a disagreement over eligibility for the fund, there will be an appeals procedure as set out below:

- Make an appeal/complaint to the school Bursary Administrator.
- Appeal/complaint to the school Bursary Manager/Head of Sixth Form.
- Appeal/complaint to the school's Bursary Management Group.

Free School Meals

Anyone who is eligible for Free School Meals should make an application, **whether or not they choose to take the meals in school**. This will assist with qualifying for the student for Bursary Fund payments and also enables the school to claim additional funding which can then be used to support the education of all students.

You can make your application for Free School Meals to Kent County Council at <https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/kent/> . Please remember that your daughter/son **does not have to actually take the Free School Meal**, they must simply be seen to be eligible. The school operates a discrete cashless catering system which eliminates visibility and / or embarrassment associated with claiming a free school meal. If your circumstances change you must inform the school and KCC as soon as possible.

Please return the completed reply slip below to Ms A Theobald in an envelope marked 'confidential' by September 15th 2023.

Yours sincerely



Mr B Slight
Head of Sixth Form

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To: Mr Slight (**c/o Ms A Theobald**), Head of Sixth Form, Mayfield Grammar School, Gravesend.

Re: Post 16 Bursary Fund

I confirm that my daughter/son _____ in Form _____

- Does/does not qualify for Vulnerable Student Bursary (please delete as appropriate).
- Does/does not qualify for Free School Meals (please delete as appropriate).
- Will/will not make a claim for a Discretionary Bursary (please delete as appropriate).

Signed _____
(Parent/Guardian)

Dated _____