



16-19 Bursary Fund Policy Statement

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The 16-19 Bursary Fund exists to help students continue with and complete their course where they would otherwise be prohibited from doing so on financial grounds.
- 1.2 The Bursary is intended to help with the hardship needs of individual students. Its intent is to 'enable' a learner to continue with his or her education and should not be viewed as an incentive to attract young people into learning. Generally, awards from the Bursary will be used towards essential course-related costs such as books, equipment, travel, field trips, visits and other costs associated with living and learning. King James's School will seek to ensure that the funds available are:
 - Distributed fairly through a process that is transparent and easily understood. Information about the process for application and consideration is available from the Sixth Form Pastoral Officer.
 - Assessed and allocated to each individual's need, taking into account the financial circumstances of the applicant and the intended use of the award.
 - Used to widen access to, and participation in, sixth form education.
- 1.3 16-19 Bursary Funding and the guidance concerning the administrative arrangements, priority groups for support and monitoring arrangements is issued by the Education Funding Agency (EFA). This gives a broad overview of the Fund and instructs schools on the appropriate use of the funding.
- 1.4 *Please note: there is a limited amount of funding which means that it will not be possible to support every application and priority will be given to those students from the families with the lowest household income and/or highest demonstrated need.*

2 PRINCIPLES

The 16-19 Bursary Fund has three elements:

Priority groups – Vulnerable Bursary

- 2.1 The following students will be eligible to receive a bursary of £1,200 per year (paid directly to the student at a weekly amount of £30), if agreed standards of behaviour and attendance are met:
 - young people who are looked after children in the care of the Local Authority or foster parents
 - care leavers
 - young people who receive Income Support (IS), or Universal Credit (UC) in place of Income Support, in their own right
 - young people getting Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit (UC) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments in their own rightAccess to a school iPad is also available.
- 2.2 Attendance and behaviour standards are as attached. These align with that expected of all students attending King James's School.

Bursaries for other young people – Weekly Discretionary

- 2.3 These awards will be targeted towards young people facing financial barriers to participation in Sixth Form studies. Priority will be given to those young people from the families with the lowest household income. Students who have a gross household income of up to £28,000 can apply for a Weekly Discretionary payment. All students receiving Free School Meals will automatically be deemed eligible for this payment. Agreed standards of behaviour and attendance should be met. Reimbursement will be made directly to the student's bank account.

Itemised/Discretionary claims

- 2.4 These are targeted to students whose family means fall into the above categories or have a family income that entitles them to receipt of one of the benefits listed on the eligibility form. They may be eligible to claim for items associated with their education, as a single payment where they are facing financial barriers to participation in Sixth Form studies. (see 1.2). The application process remains the same. For all itemised claims receipts will be required and reimbursement will be made directly to the student's bank account. Examples of receipts include retail receipts, bus/train tickets, Amazon/on-line retailer receipts etc.
- 2.5 Students from the Priority Group or Weekly Discretionary Group may also apply for additional assistance from the Bursary Fund. However, receipt of Priority Group or Weekly Discretionary payments will be taken into consideration in assessing any further awards.

3 APPLICATION PROCESS

- 3.1 In order for a student to be eligible for funding, the student must have the legal right to be resident in the United Kingdom at the start of their study programme. Students will be required to produce their passport, or other qualifying document, as proof of eligibility. Further guidance on residential eligibility can be found on page 11 of the following link:

[Advice: funding regulations for post-16 provision - GOV.UK](#)

- 3.2 **Step 1:** Completed financial assessment forms and application forms should be returned to the Pastoral Support Officer. Weekly Discretionary applications must be evidence by receipt of up to date P60/Benefit/Tax Credit/Universal Credit Award Documentation, Notice or evidence of self-employment income. All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.
- 3.3 **Step 2:** Applicants will be advised as to the outcome of their applications. Students in the priority groups will receive direct payments. Successful applicants will either have the books, equipment or other costs provided by the school or direct payment will be made to the applicant. Unsuccessful applicants will have the right of appeal.

4 AWARDS PROCESS

- 4.1 Bursary awards are made for specified course-related costs and/or other costs viewed as presenting a barrier to the individual learner's participation in education. The amount of each award will be assessed and disbursed on an individual, case-by-case basis as detailed in the individual's application form.
- 4.2 The school may offer bursaries in the form of non-cash "in kind" payments where appropriate, such as travel vouchers or meal vouchers, attendance on course-related school trips etc. Any equipment purchased by the school for use by an individual learner remains the property of the school and must be returned upon completion of or withdrawal from the course.
- 4.3 Receipt of bursary payments is conditional upon a student meeting attendance and behaviour standards that are agreed in advance. Attendance and behaviour requirements generally align with the conduct standards expected of all students. Where the learner does not meet the

agreed attendance or behaviour standards, which will be monitored on a weekly basis, the school will make every effort to advise the learner and help resolve any issues but retains the right to rescind or suspend bursary payment(s).

5 ADMINISTRATION COSTS

- 5.1 In accordance with EFA guidelines, King James's School Bursary Fund administration costs are covered by 5 per cent of our total discretionary allocation.

6 APPEALS PROCESS

- 6.1 Should learners disagree with the outcome of their application for a bursary award, they may consider an appeal. All appeals will be considered by the Director of Sixth Form. Your letter of appeal should include your name and form and the reasons for your appeal. Any additional information you wish to provide that you feel is relevant to your application can be attached. Written confirmation of the outcome of the appeal will be sent out within 10 days of the appeal being considered.
- 6.2 Any appeals against non-payment of weekly awards should follow the process as stated in the attached Attendance Requirements document.

7 REVIEW OF POLICY

- 7.1 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, taking into account the views of the school, young people and their parents and guidance from the Department for Education and the Education Funding Agency.

KING JAMES'S SCHOOL
16-19 Bursary Fund
Attendance and Behaviour Requirements

Confirmation of Bursary Fund payment is based on attendance, behaviour and learner effort. The full attendance requirements are outlined below. Behaviour in and out of class should be that expected of all students at King James's. If we become aware of any issues relating to behaviour, effort or attitude these will be taken into account and may jeopardise payments.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

A student will be paid only where they have attended all the sessions for which they are required to register; this includes timetabled lessons, private study, Enrichment, required form time and any appointments with Academic Advisors. If the student has failed to attend, payment will be withheld.

However, in some circumstances school will deem absence to be authorised and payment will not be affected. Absences will be considered to be unauthorised unless there is a valid reason otherwise. In other words, where there is an absence and the student wishes to claim this as authorised, it is up to the student to notify the school in line with this policy.

If the reason for absence could have been foreseen, then the student should have applied for authorised absence in advance. Students must apply at least five days in advance using the blue authorised absence form (available from the office). So, for example, it might be acceptable for a student to have authorised absence for a hospital appointment or university open day if this was applied for in advance; but it would not be acceptable to miss classes without prior notification and then to claim that the absence should be authorised.

Where the claimed reason for absence could not reasonably have been foreseen, the school will consider whether the absence was really unavoidable. An absence which could not have been notified in advance should be notified by phoning the school absence line (01423 798728) before 9.00am on the day in question; unless, exceptionally, there is a good reason why this could not be done. On return to school students should complete a pink authorised absence form, which needs to be signed by a parent/guardian, then passed to the Sixth Form Pastoral Officer as soon as possible, and certainly within one week of return.

Absences which can be foreseen

Absences will only be authorised in advance if the reason given for the absence is considered justifiable. The following are examples of reasons for absence which would usually be considered to be acceptable:

- A medical appointment which cannot be arranged outside school hours. This must be supported by an appointment card.
- To look after a family member or another person for whom the student has caring responsibilities. Authorised absences for this reason will be granted sparingly; where frequent absence becomes necessary solutions will be explored personally with the student.
- A religious holiday
- A visit to a university or college to attend a maximum of three open days per year
- Career-related or university or college interviews
- Participating in a significant extra-curricular activity, such as drama, music, sport or volunteering. Authorised absence will only be granted where the activity reflects a significant level of personal achievement (for example, taking part in a regional or national event), or for some other one-off event. Authorised absences for this reason will be granted sparingly; where a pattern of frequent participation in such activities is proposed, solutions will be explored personally with the student.
- Attendance at a probation meeting

- Attendance at a funeral of immediate family or close friend.
- Severe disruption to a student's mode of transport (for example, where a student commutes by rail and a rail strike means there is no practical way of getting to school).
- A driving test.
- Moving house (1 day).
- Evidence of court attendance.
- Family bereavement (conditions will be explored personally with the student).
- Wedding of immediate family member (1 day).
- Educational visits approved by the school.
- Staff training days.
- Study leave.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive, and the school will take account of: the inherent reasonableness of any case; the number of absences taken by any one individual; repetitions of the same excuse; and whether the excuse is backed up with evidence.

The following reasons for absence would **not** generally be acceptable:

- A student is absent from a session if they have not obtained authorisation for absence
- A holiday taken during term-time
- A social event during term-time
- Part or full-time work which is not part of the student's programme of study
- Leisure activities
- Birthdays or similar celebrations
- Babysitting younger siblings
- Shopping
- Driving lessons
- Lateness
- Routine medical/dental appointments
- Missing lessons to complete coursework/homework
- Interviews for part-time work

This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

Absences which cannot be foreseen

Where an absence genuinely could not be foreseen, the student should make arrangement to tell the school as soon as possible on the day in question that they will be missing classes. This should be done by phoning the school absence line (01423 798728) before 9.00am and should be followed up by a pink authorised absence form. This must be fully completed and handed to the Sixth Form Pastoral Support Officer within one week of return. Where a student has failed to do this, the absence will be treated as unauthorised, and therefore the student will be docked payment for the week in question.

The only exception to the principle above is where the student can supply a strong reason why they failed to contact the school. This might be because an event has been particularly disturbing or unpleasant, or because there has been a genuine practical barrier.

The following are examples of reasons for absence which would tend to be acceptable, provided that the school has been notified on the day:

- An emergency situation involving a family member or another person for whom the student has caring responsibilities. Sudden severe illness would be an example. However, while such cases will be treated sympathetically on a one-off-basis, they will not be acceptable as regular grounds for authorising absence.
- Transport problems, where these were not known about in advance, and where there is no alternative means to hand. It is reasonable to expect students who live in Knaresborough to walk to school, if they do not have a relevant disability. Lateness due to transport problems must be notified to the Sixth Form Pastoral Support Officer on the morning in question.
- Sickness Absence: In general isolated periods of genuine sickness **need not** affect payment. However, if a student is away for more than three days in any one week one week's funding will be docked from the next payout. Also, schools are entitled to turn down applications for authorised sickness absence if they have reason to doubt the validity. Clearly an emerging pattern of non-attendance due to sickness without explanation would be unacceptable.

NB: If a student is excluded from school then payment will be deducted from the next payout.

APPEALS PROCEDURE AGAINST NON-PAYMENT

Where a decision has been taken that funds should be docked due to previous non-attendance or behaviour issues the student will be informed in writing of the reasons. The student then has the right of appeal, to be put in writing to the Director of Sixth Form. This is subject to the following principles:

- There is no necessity to explain in detail why an absence has been deemed to be unauthorised. Absences are initially deemed to be unauthorised: the burden of proof that they should be authorised lies on the student.
- The appeal will be handled within school by the Director of Sixth Form. The student will have the opportunity to present his or her case and to have an advisor present (who may state the case on the student's behalf). Legal representation is wholly inappropriate.
- The school will provide only one appeal hearing; an appeal decision is final.
- There is no mechanism for appeal against a stoppage decision to any party outside of the school.