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# Disadvantage Funding and 16-19 Bursary Policy

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## PART 1 – Disadvantage Funding General Information

### 1. Allocation

On an annual basis:

- an allocation from the Student Support Fee will be approved by the Headteacher to assist with the inclusion of students suffering financial hardship, known as the Disadvantage Fund.
- an allocation of funds to support sixth form students in financial hardship, known as the 16-19 Bursary Fund is provided by the Department for education.

### 2. Rationale

To enable the school to use available resources to the maximum benefit of pupils most in need and ensure that core enrichment opportunities are available to all.

### 3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that enrichment opportunities are available to all young people, and that these should not be dependent on parental wealth.
- 3.2. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to administer the policy on the Disadvantage Fund with the support of relevant staff in school.
- 3.3. It is the responsibility of senior and pastoral staff to ensure that intelligence about children in social, financial hardship is gathered so that no child slips through the net. It is also the responsibility of senior and pastoral staff to monitor that take-up and participation of enrichment activities are monitored to ensure they are inclusive.
- 3.4. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to monitor both the inclusiveness of enrichment opportunities and the impact of the Designated Fund policy.
- 3.5. Any complaints about the Headteacher's administration of the policy will be dealt with through the School Complaints Procedure, which is available on the school website.

### 4. Communication & Administration

All parents will be informed via the website and in letters, that limited resources may be available for financial support and for 16-19 students it will be publicised through the 6th form pastoral system and academic departments where it is relevant. Decisions about the fund will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with Senior and pastoral/inclusion staff.

In the case of the Pre16 Disadvantage subsidy, the complexities of the benefit system and the variations in people's circumstances make it impossible to set any objective benchmarks and school staff are not able to question the information they are given.

The 16-19 Bursary has set criteria of eligibility that is publicised in the guidance and evidence is required.

#### 5. Levels of support

Activities will be supported between 25% to 75% of the cost depending on the nature of the activity. In addition, a standard cost of £12.00 per day will be made for subsistence costs on residential activities. On day excursions/ activities, children will be provided with a packed lunch if on free school meals, otherwise they will be expected to bring their own.

Parents/guardians will be expected to cover any pocket money costs.

#### 6. Application

All requests will be treated equally. Priority will be given in the order set out in the relevant Part 2 or 3 of this document. The funds are finite, and requests will be processed in the light of available resources.

Successful applicants will be advised in writing of the level of support and the method of payment.

## PART 2 –Disadvantage Subsidy for students in Year 7-11 (pre-16)

### 7. Prioritisation of groups of students

- Who have Free School Meals.
- Who are in the care of the Local Authority.
- Who are young carers.
- Who are refugees or asylum seekers.
- Who are on the SEN Register.
- Who the school knows, through its pastoral/inclusion intelligence and monitoring, do not take part in extra-curricular or enrichment activity and/or experience financial hardship.
- Pupils where parents make a special request to the Headteacher.

### 8. School prioritisation of enrichment which will be financially supported on request

- i. Y8 Battlefields Trip.
- ii. Supporting special equipment for the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.
- iii. Theatre, concert and gallery visits beneficial to the syllabuses of English, Theatre Studies, Music and Art in KS4.
- iv. Contribution to transport costs for students chosen to play in house or school teams and subscription costs for the extra-curricular sport offered as part of the PE department's programme (eg., Judo).
- v. Access to vocational educational provision in KS4

### 9. Application

Parent/Carer to apply in writing, to the Headteacher, for each individual request.

## PART 3 – 16-19 Bursary

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

1. Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups
2. Discretionary bursaries which institutions award using policies they set, in line with these funding rules

The school will administer this fund within the guidelines set out in the document 16-19 Bursary Fund Guide for the relevant year and in the spirit of the school's ethos.

Our aim will be to use the fund to the maximum benefit of students most in need to overcome financial barriers to their learning, also ensuring that core curricular enrichment opportunities are available to all.

The Blue Coat Sixth Form will ensure that the funds available through the bursary are:

- Fairly allocated through an application process which is robust and transparent
- Allocated based on an individual need considering the financial circumstances of the applicant, taking into consideration the intended use of the award
- Used appropriately to enhance and widen the applicant's participation in sixth form education.

5% of the total allocation will be used to meet administration costs.

The bursary fund is intended to help students with the essential costs of participating in their study programme, so to help with the cost of essential books or equipment or with the cost of travelling to school or college, for example. The bursary fund is not intended to support costs not related to education (living costs), extra-curricular activities or provide learning support – services that institutions give to students – such as counselling, mentoring or extra tutoring.

### **Free School Meals**

Students enrolled in the Sixth Form can apply to their local council for a free school meal. Where a student is eligible, Blue Coat will ensure the daily provision of a school meal from the school restaurant. The school will use the discretionary bursary to fund the cost of the meal for those students who are eligible. This cost will be deducted from the bursary prior to the allocation of the discretionary awards for that academic year and will vary each year depending on the number of eligible students.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund has 2 categories:

#### **a) Defined (Vulnerable) Group Bursary**

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.

Students who meet the criteria listed below will be eligible to receive a set amount of £1,200 per annum (which will be pro-rated where appropriate). The defined vulnerable bursary is earmarked for those students who fall into one of the following categories:

- In care
- Care leavers
- Young Person in receipt of 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
- Young Person in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own right.

In some cases, a young person might be eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups because they meet one or more of the criteria. However, their financial needs are already met, and/or they have no relevant costs need so do not need support from the scheme. For example:

- A student attending specialist residential provision that covers their educational costs in full
- A student taking a distance learning programme who has no financial barriers to participation (for example, they don't have any travel costs or meal costs)
- A student in local authority care whose educational costs are covered in full by the local authority
- A student who is financial supported by their partner.

A student who has been offered this bursary cannot also apply for the discretionary Bursary.

#### **b) Discretionary Bursary**

The discretionary bursary is awarded to help students with the cost of travel, to buy essential books, equipment, or specialist clothing (such as protective overalls, for example). These are items that a student would otherwise need to pay for to participate.

This discretionary bursary is an amount of money that is provided to the school for allocation to students, based on individual applications, who fall into the following categories:

- Currently claiming FSM as a 16-19 student
- Unaccompanied asylum seeker (UASC)
- Young Carer not in receipt of a carer's allowance
- Parental receipt of Benefits
- Total household income of less than £25,000.

The school will base all decisions about which students receive a discretionary bursary and how much bursary they receive on each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need. These will vary from student to student, depending on, for example, eligibility based on household income, and their actual financial needs such as the distance they need to travel to the institution and the requirements of their study programme. The school will not make blanket or flat rate/fixed rate payments.

- The school will manage the number and size of discretionary bursary awards to keep within the allocated yearly budget.
- The school will retain a small emergency fund from the yearly allocation to support students

who face exceptional circumstances during the year due to a change in their situation – if it impacts on their ability to participate in education.

- There is no set limit for the amount of discretionary bursary that can be awarded to students. Institutions can award discretionary bursaries equal to or higher than the bursary for vulnerable group's maximum if they have clearly identified an individual student has actual costs that require this level of funding to participate.
- All evidence and rationale for allocation will be held by the school for audit purposes.

#### 10. Eligibility for payment of the 16-19 Bursary

- The student must meet the criteria defined in section 3a or 3b above. Evidence of eligibility must be provided at application and then hereafter as requested; a copy will be retained by school. Examples of evidence are correspondence from Local Authority, Social Services, DWP, Job Centre Plus, DLA or PIP award, 3 x pay slip, P60 for the current academic year or 3 months Universal Credit (original documentation must be provided).
- Students must meet the age and residency criteria which follow to be eligible for help from the bursary fund.
- The Learner must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at the start of the academic year in which they start their programme of study.
- Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing 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.
- The Learner must be/have been up to the age of 18, registered as a student at The Blue Coat School.
- The Learner must have achieved a minimum 90% attendance record from the date of registration to the date of the next due payment.
- The Learner must achieve satisfactory completion of their learning goals – full attendance to lessons/ILC sessions/ am and pm registration /exams, progress and completion of work / coursework / assignments and behaviour. Subject staff will be contacted in connection to this, and future payments will be dependent on progress in these areas.
- The elements of the 16-19 Bursary Fund are only applicable if agreed standards of conduct and attendance are met. The guidelines for expected attendance and conduct are clearly set out in the Sixth Form Learner Agreement. Whilst the school will make every effort to advise the student and to help resolve any issues or barriers to learning, it retains the right to rescind or suspend bursary payments.

#### **Emergency Food**

The school may use the bursary fund in individual cases of severe hardship, to provide **food or basic hygiene support** whilst a student attends their study programme, for a student who we consider to be in real need, without undertaking the checks on household income or gathering other evidence that would normally be required. We expect this to only apply to a very small number of the total 16



to 19 student cohort.

#### 11. School prioritisation of enrichment which will be financially supported on request

##### **The priority for allocation of funds is as follows:**

- i. Transport for students living outside of the Greater Manchester transport area.
- ii. Payment of the administration charge for the Our Pass Travel card for students living within the Greater Manchester transport area.
- iii. A one-off payment to students in the first academic term towards the cost of purchasing the Sixth Form lanyard and suitable clothing in line with the school Sixth Form dress code.
- iv. A one-off payment to students in the first academic term towards the cost of books and relevant equipment.
- v. At the school's discretion, and depending on the funds available, financial assistance may be awarded towards the cost of core curricular enrichment opportunities. The following will be given priority: theatre, concert and gallery visits beneficial to the syllabuses of English, Theatre Studies, Music and Art in Sixth Form; fieldwork for Geography, Biology and Science for students taking these subjects at A-level.
- vi. Financial assistance towards fees in relation to a student's course of study, for example UCAS application.
- vii. Costs attributed to university visits and open days, higher level apprenticeship and employment interviews.
- viii. Discretionary awards for other purposes in exceptional circumstances following discussion between the student and the pastoral team.

#### 12. Application

The application for the current academic year is available on the Sixth Form website. The application form captures all the relevant information that the school requires to assess the application in line with the bursary rules, including household income and the actual financial needs the student has to support their participation (such as help with travel or to buy essential books or equipment for example). The application form should be signed by the student.

The initial application for the identified academic year should be submitted by a specified set date to enable the school to holistically assess the overall demand by the current cohort and therefore make discretionary awards on a fair basis. The initial specific deadline date relevant to the year of application is clearly stated in the application form. Applications can be made at any point throughout the academic year as we understand that a household can experience a change in circumstances at any time.

- Students and their families will request funding from the 16-19 Bursary by completing the form available on the Sixth Form website.
- Where an award for support is made from the bursary fund it is the responsibility of the student to inform the school of changes in circumstances that may result in the support no longer being needed.
- A student who feels aggrieved about how his/her request for 16 – 19 Bursary funding has been handled, should follow the school's complaints procedure.

