



Purpose

To provide financial help to learners who are facing financial difficulty, in particular, learners who may struggle to fully participate in their chosen course without help towards course costs. RSDD is able to award vulnerable student and discretionary bursaries based on the needs of individual students, taking into account their individual circumstances and within the guidelines and funding awarded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

Allocation

RSDD is able to offer discretionary bursaries through funding allocated to us from the Education Funding Agency (ESFA). The funding is held and distributed from the school's restricted funds. RSDD is also able to access additional funding from the ESFA to support students who are eligible for a vulnerable student bursary. In allocating payments RSDD will have due regard to the guidance and checklist at, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2024-to-2025-academic-year>



Criteria for allocation

- To be eligible to receive a bursary in the 2024 to 2025 academic year a student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2024.
- 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 plus 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 additional support to continue their participation.

The two types of Bursary Fund

1. Vulnerable Bursary

Those who qualify for this level of bursary could receive up to £1200 per year if they are in the following defined vulnerable groups:

- In care;
- Care leavers;
- Young people in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit

- Disabled young people in receipt of Employment Support Allowance who are also in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments.

2. Discretionary Bursary

These types of bursary are targeted to young people who have a low family income. The assistance that is provided will best fit the needs and circumstances of students, assisting those who face the greatest financial barriers to education in their daily lives.

A gentle reminder, those that have qualified for a bursary in Year 12 need to apply again in Year 13 to ensure their continued eligibility.

Any bursary award will be subject to students meeting all the targets and objectives set out in their Post 16 Learning Agreement, satisfactory attendance, and standard of behaviour and providing documentary evidence to the School Bursary Panel.

To be eligible for the discretionary bursary, students must be facing financial barriers to participation and need help to stay in education.

Institutions receive discretionary bursary funding allocations from ESFA that they manage directly, deciding which students are eligible for help and how much they receive, in line with this guide and their own policies.

Any bursary award may be a contribution towards the cost and may not necessarily cover the whole cost. The award will be subject to students meeting all the targets and objectives set out in their Post 16 Learning Agreement, including satisfactory attendance and standard behaviour as set out in the school absence protocol and producing documentary evidence / receipts to the Bursary Panel as requested.

Administration

- Applications will be accepted any time during the academic year up to the last day of the first half of the summer term and may be made at a pro rata rate from the date of application to the year-end date.
- Payment for the full Bursary will be made directly to students' bank accounts, as nominated by them, usually in three installments; October, January and April or as a one off payment where students need resources for the year ahead.
- "Payment in kind" may be considered appropriate, e.g. for food, books, course materials and travel passes, which will be deducted from the total bursary award.
- Payments for either Bursary will not be paid into another person's bank account unless there are exceptional circumstances where the student is unable to administer their own account.
- 10% of the Bursary Fund allocation will normally be retained as a contingency until April of each year for students who join the school later than the start of the academic year.
- No percentage of the total Bursary Fund will be retained to assist with administration costs.

Confidentiality

We handle applications confidentially and will make sure that students are not singled out (please talk to us if you are worried about this). Copies of information given in evidence to support applications will be retained by the school for audit purposes and will be kept confidentially.

Fraud

If students and/or parents/carers provide false or incomplete information or we are not about part of the household income that is relevant, the matter may be referred to the Department for Education or the Police. The student and parents/carers could face prosecution and the school will recover any payments for which the student is not eligible.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Deputy Head teacher for Achievement and Post 16 Lead will be responsible for ensuring that students meet targets and objectives as per their Learning Agreement. Failure to do so may result in the funding being withdrawn.

The School Commercial Manager will be responsible for monitoring and reporting student absence in accordance to the school absence protocol and maintaining records in accordance with the requirements of the ESFA and audit.

Appeals

All applications received will be considered by the Bursary Panel. The Bursary Panel consists of the Headteacher, School Commercial Manager, Deputy Headteacher Achievement and Post 16 Lead. The Bursary Panel reserves the right to award funding as it sees appropriate.

The decision made by the Bursary Panel on the level of funding awarded is final. The Governors Appeals Committee will receive and determine only upon any appeals where funding is refused. Appeals should be addressed to the Clerk of the Governors c/o the school.