Carwarden House School

Post 16 (16 to 19) Bursary Policy

Reviewed by Audit, Risk & Resources	**27th April 2026**
Date of Next Review:	**April 2027**
Responsible Officer:	**KS5 Lead**

16 to 19 Bursary Fund

Introduction

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund is paid by the Department for Education (DofE) and provides financial support to help students overcome specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

1. Vulnerable Bursary

The bursary fund is specifically designed to support students overcome the individual financial barriers to participation in education that they face and for those who most need help with costs of staying in education.

Students who meet the criteria **and who have a financial need** can apply for the 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 in education.

Students applying for the vulnerable bursary will be awarded the amount of support they need to participate based on an assessment of the types of costs they have. A financial needs assessment will be carried out to confirm actual financial need through completion of an application form. Appropriate evidence will be seen, and copies retained to confirm student's eligibility. Award letter will be issued to the student confirming the amount of support, what support will be made in-kind and payment conditions.

2. Discretionary Bursary

The school is allocated a very small amount of bursary funding from which Discretionary Awards can be allocated to young people. Discretionary Awards are for students who are facing genuine financial barriers to participating in their education. Students will need to provide evidence of educational and financial need and complete an application form.

Who can apply for a 16-19 bursary?

The student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31st August of the year prior to application to be eligible for help from the bursary fund.

Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing on a study programme, they begin 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.

Vulnerable Bursary

Eligibility criteria:

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 may need a greater level of support to enable them to continue to participate.

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**.

The bursary for vulnerable groups can pay up to £1,200 per year (minus £50 administration fee) to a student participating on a study programme that lasts for 30 weeks or more if they need that amount of support.

Students should only receive the amount they need to participate, and the school will not automatically award students £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

The school is responsible for verifying that young people meet the criteria for vulnerable bursaries.

An application will need to be completed and submitted with the necessary evidence of being in one of the four groups above and confirmation of financial need. The school will then complete the 16 -19 Bursary Fund Vulnerable Students funding claim form in order to request the funding.

The school may decide that, although a young person may be eligible for a vulnerable 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 being met. The school can refuse a student's application on this basis.

Application

- All students who believe they are eligible for a 16-19 Bursary should submit a bursary application form.
- There will be up to three bursary application windows as detailed below:
  Window 1: All bursary applications and resource requests must be submitted no later than the last day of October. If applications are not submitted by this date, the next available opportunity for students to have their applications and requests reviewed will be when Window 2 opens.
  Window 2: All bursary applications (or new resource requests for those who applied in Window 1) will need to be submitted no later than the end of January. If applications are not submitted by this date, the next available opportunity for students to have their applications and requests reviewed will be when Window 3 opens.
  Window 3: All bursary applications (or new resource requests) will need to be submitted no later than the end of February. If applications are not submitted by this date, there will be no further opportunities to submit requests or new applications unless authorised by the SLT.

Declaration

It is important to note that giving false or incomplete information that leads to incorrect/overpayment may result in future payments being stopped and any incorrectly paid funds being recovered. This might result in a referral to the police. To acknowledge understanding of this, students and/or their families will be required to sign a declaration form prior to submitting their application for approval.

Use of vulnerable bursary

The DofE does not recommend that large or lump sum bursary payments are made to students, rather that the bursary is paid in-kind. For example, the school would pay for a travel pass from the bursary rather than the cash being paid to the student and would explain to the student that is amount will be deducted from their allowance.

When the school does make a bursary payment in cash, it will be via a BACS payment into a bank account in the student's own name.

The school insists 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 that 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 will provide support from the vulnerable bursary fund by making 'payments in kind' where possible and appropriate. When participating, the school will use part of the fund to pay for the leisure fund, work experience health & safety assessments and the sixth form residential/staycation. Up to 5% of the fund will be retained for administration costs in line with DofE guidelines 2025/26.

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.

Students will be awarded the amount of support they need to participate based on an assessment of the types of costs they have.

Discretionary Bursary

Eligibility criteria:

The school is allocated bursary funding from which Discretionary Awards can be allocated to young people. Discretionary Awards are for students who are facing genuine financial barriers to participating in their education. Students will need to provide evidence of educational need and financial need.

A maximum of £100 per academic year may be awarded if your household income is below £16,000. You may be eligible for costs towards essential equipment, transport to college. If your household income is between £16,001 and £25,000, you may be eligible for up to £75 per academic year.

An application form (see appendix 2) with the evidence for eligibility will need to be completed.

Financial information is required to validate your bursary application. Please note that your financial information will be treated in the strictest confidence, stored electronically on school files and deleted at the end of the academic year. Your application will only be processed when all relevant evidence of income is received.

Conditions of funding for vulnerable and discretionary bursary

Students will be reviewed termly to ensure that their attendance and general conduct is acceptable.

In order for payments to be made each term:

- Students must achieve 95% attendance or higher since the last review, (allowing for illness, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances)
- Students must have complied with the school's policies in respect of lateness and behaviour.

Schools' responsibilities in managing complaints or appeals.

Any student (or parent on behalf of a student) who is unhappy with how the school has handled their application for bursary funding should follow the school's complaints procedure. An appeal must be made in writing to the school within 4 weeks of the decision being made. Appeals need to clearly explain what is being

appealed and why the decision is thought to be incorrect. The appeal will be heard by The Headteacher, Assistant headteacher and a representative governor.

All information in relation to bursary funding supplied will be treated in the strictest confidence throughout the process and all copies of documentation will be securely held and shredded after 6 years (auditing purposes).

Students are required to inform the school of changes in their financial circumstances.

Appendix 1

Application for 16 -19 Vulnerable Bursary 2025/26

Please read the accompanying policy for applying for the bursary which can be found on Carwarden House school website.

Student Name: _____ DOB _____

I would like to apply for the 16 -19 vulnerable bursary.

Please tick the group you are eligible for:

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- in care ☐
- care leaver ☐
- 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. ☐

Evidence supplied with application: ☐ (e.g.: copy of benefits/they are in care/a care leaver)

When considering the application, does the student have a financial need to enable them to participate in education? _____

I/We confirm that all information provided is true and I will notify school if any circumstances change. I/We understand that the bursary/discretionary award will be provided subject to compliance with our Code of Conduct and Attendance Policy I/We understand that money/equipment may be claimed back if I/We knowingly give information which is discovered to be false. Further information regarding the bursary can be found at https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund

Signed

Print name.

Please return completed form with accompanying evidence to 6th Form.

Appendix 2

Application for Discretionary Bursary 2025/26

Please read the accompanying policy for applying for the bursary which can be found on Carwarden House school website.

Student name: _____ DOB _____

Please state why you believe your situation to be exceptional and to merit additional financial support. Please give details of your family situation, this may include household income and state what you hope to achieve from this additional support. There is no automatic entitlement to funding.	
Please give an outline of the likely support required e.g., bus pass, equipment, travel etc.	
Item Cost (if known)	

I/We confirm that all information provided is true and I will notify school if any circumstances change. I/We understand that the bursary/discretionary award will be provided subject to compliance with our Code of Conduct and Attendance Policy I/We understand that money/equipment may be claimed back if I/We knowingly give information which is discovered to be false. Further information regarding the bursary can be found at https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund

Signed

Print name.

Please return completed form with any accompanying evidence to 6th Form