



16-19 Bursary Policy

16-19 Bursary Fund Policy

1. Aims and scope

The 16-19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome specific financial barriers to participation so that they can remain in education and successfully complete their programme of study.

There are two types of 16-19 bursary:

- bursaries for students in defined vulnerable groups; and
- discretionary bursaries.

This policy sets out how Langley Grammar School (the School) will administer and prioritise the 16-19 Bursary Fund.

The School aims to:

- administer the Fund fairly, consistently and transparently;
- target support towards students experiencing genuine financial barriers to participation;
- assess awards according to each student's actual financial need and participation costs;
- ensure that the Fund is used appropriately and in accordance with Department for Education (DfE) guidance; and
- maintain proportionate records to demonstrate how funding decisions have been made.

The named contact for enquiries about the 16-19 Bursary Fund is the Director of Sixth Form.

2. Guidance

This policy is based on DfE guidance for the 16-19 Bursary Fund. The policy complies with the School's funding agreement, articles of association and relevant financial procedures.

3. Types of bursary

3.1 Bursaries for students in defined vulnerable groups

Students who meet the national criteria for a defined vulnerable group may apply for support where they have an actual financial need. Meeting the vulnerable group criteria does not automatically entitle a student to a bursary or to a particular amount.

3.2 Discretionary bursaries

The School receives an annual discretionary bursary allocation from the DfE. Discretionary bursaries are awarded to eligible students experiencing financial barriers to participation. Awards are based upon individual circumstances, actual participation needs and the funding available. The Fund is limited. Meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee an award or mean that the School will be able to meet all of a student's identified costs.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- approving this policy;
- ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place for administration of the Fund; and
- ensuring that the policy is applied consistently.

4.2 Director of Sixth Form

The Director of Sixth Form is responsible for:

- promoting awareness of the Fund to students and prospective applicants;
- supporting students to access the application process where necessary;
- participating in the assessment of applications;
- monitoring relevant attendance and engagement conditions; and
- acting as the principal point of contact for students and families.

4.3 School Business Manager

The School Business Manager is responsible for:

- ensuring that bursary funding is accounted for accurately;
- maintaining appropriate financial oversight of the Fund;
- ensuring that expenditure is consistent with the purposes of the Fund; and
- participating in the assessment of applications.

4.4 Bursary Application Panel

Applications will be considered by a Bursary Application Panel consisting of:

- the Director of Sixth Form;
- the School Business Manager; and
- a member of the Disadvantaged Team or another appropriate member of staff.

The Panel will review applications and supporting evidence and determine the appropriate level and form of support in accordance with this policy.

5. How the Fund may be used

The Fund is intended to support costs which students would otherwise need to meet in order to participate in their education. This may include:

- travel to and from School or an educational placement;
- food while attending their programme of study;
- books and course materials;
- essential equipment;
- educational visits and field trips which support the student's programme of study;
- specialist clothing or other course-related requirements;
- costs associated with attending university interviews, open days or similar progression activities;
- curriculum access devices and associated equipment; and
- other identifiable costs which the School considers necessary to enable participation.

Langley Grammar School operates a 1:1 device model and access to an appropriate curriculum device is an integral part of teaching and learning. Where financial circumstances create a barrier to obtaining or maintaining the required device, support towards this cost may therefore be provided through the Fund.

The Fund will not normally be used for:

- general living costs unrelated to participation in education;
- non-essential extracurricular activities;
- costs which should properly be met from another source of School or public funding; or
- services that the School would ordinarily provide to all students.

Where practical and appropriate, the School may provide support in kind, for example by paying for educational visits directly or purchasing equipment.

6. General eligibility

Eligibility will be determined in accordance with current DfE 16–19 Bursary Fund guidance. Students will normally need to:

- meet the relevant age requirements;
- meet the DfE residency requirements;
- be participating in eligible education provision; and
- demonstrate an actual financial need associated with participation.

Eligibility criteria are considered alongside the student's individual financial needs. No student will automatically receive an award solely because they meet an eligibility criterion. Students who have no identifiable participation costs will not receive funding.

7. Bursaries for students in defined vulnerable groups

Students may be eligible for a bursary for defined vulnerable groups where they meet the current DfE criteria, including students who are:

- in care;
- care leavers;
- receiving Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves, or themselves and someone dependent upon them; or
- receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit in their own right.

The School will obtain the evidence required by DfE guidance to confirm eligibility. Students who meet one of these criteria are not automatically entitled to £1,200 or any other fixed amount. The School will assess the student's actual financial need and participation costs and provide the level of support reasonably required.

For eligible study programmes lasting 30 weeks or more, support will generally be up to £1,200. The School may exercise discretion in accordance with DfE guidance where a student requires additional support to remain in education.

Eligibility and financial need will be reviewed at least annually.

8. Discretionary bursaries

8.1 Financial eligibility

Students may apply for a discretionary bursary where:

- gross annual household income does not exceed £27,500; and/or
- the student or a sibling qualifies for Free School Meals.

Students who do not meet these criteria but are experiencing exceptional financial hardship or a significant change in circumstances may still apply. Such applications will be considered individually.

The School may consider other relevant circumstances when assessing financial need, including:

- household income;
- benefits received;
- the number of dependent children within the household;
- travel requirements;
- requirements of the student's programme of study;
- additional responsibilities or exceptional circumstances; and
- other sources of financial support available to the student.

8.2 Assessment of actual participation need

Students applying for a discretionary bursary will be asked to identify and, where reasonably possible, quantify the costs for which they require assistance.

These may include:

- travel;
- food;
- educational visits;

- curriculum access devices and IT equipment;
- books and materials;
- other equipment; and
- other relevant participation costs.

The School will assess the reasonableness of the costs identified and their relationship to the student's participation in education. There is no automatic or fixed-rate discretionary bursary award.

Awards will reflect:

- the student's individual financial circumstances;
- the actual participation costs identified;
- the relative importance of those costs to participation; and
- the total funding available.

8.3 Where demand exceeds available funding

The discretionary bursary is a limited fund and the total value of eligible applications may exceed the School's annual allocation. The School will therefore consider applications received by the main application deadline collectively before determining initial awards.

Where available funding is insufficient to meet all eligible requests in full, the Bursary Application Panel will prioritise costs which are most directly related to enabling attendance and participation in education.

The Panel may make an award which is lower than the total amount requested.

In doing so, it will seek to distribute the available funding fairly and consistently, having regard to:

- the student's financial circumstances;
- the nature and value of the participation costs identified;
- the extent to which the cost represents a barrier to attendance or participation;
- other support available; and
- the need to retain sufficient flexibility to respond to changes in circumstances during the academic year.

The reason for the amount awarded will be recorded.

9. Contingency and emergency support

The School will retain a reasonable proportion of the discretionary allocation to respond to:

- students whose financial circumstances change during the academic year;
- students joining the School after the initial allocation process;
- exceptional financial hardship; and
- urgent meal, travel or other participation needs.

Where a student faces severe or immediate hardship, the School may provide temporary emergency support before completing the full application and evidence process where it is reasonable to do so.

The reason for any emergency support, its value and the student receiving it will be recorded.

Any remaining contingency funding may be allocated to eligible students later in the academic year following review of the Fund.

10. Applications

Applications must be made using the School's 16–19 Bursary Fund Application Form.

The School will publish a main application deadline each year. Applications received by this deadline will normally be considered together to allow the School to assess overall demand and allocate the available discretionary funding fairly.

Applications may still be made after the main deadline, particularly where a student's circumstances have changed. Later applications will be considered subject to eligibility, assessed need and funding remaining available.

Students will be supported to make an application where a learning difficulty, disability or other circumstance creates a barrier to completing the process.

The School may also provide reasonable assistance where a student is experiencing difficulty obtaining evidence from a parent, guardian or carer.

11. Evidence

Applications must be supported by appropriate evidence of eligibility and financial circumstances.

Depending upon the circumstances, this may include:

- P60s;
- recent payslips;
- Universal Credit or other benefit statements;
- Tax Credit Award Notices;
- Self Assessment Tax Calculations;
- pension or other income statements;
- confirmation of Free School Meal eligibility;
- evidence required to demonstrate membership of a defined vulnerable group; or
- other appropriate evidence of household financial circumstances.

The School may request reasonable evidence of the participation costs identified within an application.

The evidence required will be proportionate to the nature and value of the cost.

For regular costs such as food and travel, the School will not normally require students to provide receipts for every individual transaction. The School may instead establish a reasonable expected cost using information provided at application, publicly available prices, initial supporting evidence or other proportionate means.

For one-off purchases or higher-value items, the School may require quotations, invoices, receipts or other evidence where appropriate. Where the School pays a cost directly, such as an educational visit, the School's own financial records will provide evidence of the expenditure.

12. Decisions and notification

The Bursary Application Panel will record:

- the student's eligibility;
- the participation costs identified;
- the total amount requested;
- the amount awarded;
- the purpose or categories for which support has been awarded; and
- a brief rationale for the decision where the award differs materially from the amount requested.

Students will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application and the amount and purpose of any support awarded.

13. Payment and provision of support

The method of providing support will depend upon the nature of the identified need.

The School may:

- pay costs directly;
- purchase or provide items in kind;
- provide vouchers or similar support;
- reimburse evidenced expenditure where appropriate; or

- make payments by BACS to a bank account in the student's name.

The School will use in-kind or direct provision where this is practical and represents an efficient means of meeting the identified need. Cash payments are not an entitlement and will be used where they are an appropriate and proportionate means of supporting the identified participation costs. The timing and frequency of payments may vary according to the nature of the costs being supported.

14. Conditions of support

Students receiving support are expected to:

- remain enrolled on and participate in their programme of study;
- meet the School's reasonable expectations regarding attendance, punctuality, behaviour and engagement; and
- use bursary support for the purposes for which it was awarded.

The School will take individual circumstances into account before withholding or withdrawing support. This includes illness, caring responsibilities, disability, safeguarding circumstances or other exceptional factors.

Support will not be withdrawn in a way which unreasonably creates or increases a barrier to the student's continued participation. Where a student withdraws from their programme of study, future support will normally cease. Where the School has reasonable evidence that bursary funding has deliberately been used for purposes other than those for which it was awarded, it may suspend further support and, where appropriate, seek recovery.

Where misleading or fraudulent information has knowingly been provided, the School may seek recovery of any resulting overpayment and will report significant fraud in accordance with DfE requirements.

15. Changes in circumstances

Students and/or their parent, guardian or carer must inform the School where there is a significant change in circumstances which may affect eligibility or financial need. A change in circumstances will not automatically result in support being withdrawn. The Bursary Application Panel may reconsider the student's needs and determine whether support should continue, increase, reduce or cease.

16. Students transferring or withdrawing

Where a student receiving bursary support transfers to another education or training provider, the School will provide appropriate information or liaison where required to support continuity of assistance.

Where a student transfers into the School, their circumstances and participation needs will be assessed in accordance with this policy.

Where a student withdraws from education and does not transfer to another provider, future bursary support will cease. Payments or support properly provided before withdrawal will not normally be recovered.

17. Record keeping and audit

The School will maintain accurate and proportionate records relating to administration of the Fund.

These will include, where applicable:

- applications and supporting evidence;
- evidence of eligibility;
- records of students assessed as eligible but having no actual financial need;
- records of assessment decisions and the rationale for awards;
- the participation costs against which awards have been made;
- records of payments and support provided;
- relevant attendance or participation information;
- records relating to emergency support; and
- other records required by current DfE guidance.

Records will be retained securely in accordance with DfE requirements and the School's records retention arrangements.

18. Unspent funds

The School will manage unspent bursary funding in accordance with current DfE requirements. Funding will not be carried forward beyond the period permitted by the DfE. Any unspent funding requiring return will be reported and repaid in accordance with the process and timescales specified by the DfE.

19. Appeals and complaints

Students who are dissatisfied with the outcome of a bursary application may ask for the decision to be reviewed. Requests for review should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher, explaining the reason for the request and providing any additional relevant information.

The Headteacher may determine the review personally or appoint appropriate individuals who were not responsible for the original decision. The outcome of the review will be communicated to the student in writing.

Concerns about the administration of the bursary scheme which cannot be resolved through this process may be raised through the School's Complaints Procedure.

20. Confidentiality and data protection

Applications and supporting evidence will be treated confidentially and accessed only by staff who require the information to administer, oversee or review the Fund.

Personal information will be processed and retained in accordance with the School's data protection policies and applicable data protection legislation.

Where it is necessary to seek additional information from another person or organisation in order to assess an application, this will be handled appropriately and only information necessary for that purpose will be shared.

21. Monitoring and review

The School Business Manager and Director of Sixth Form will monitor the operation of the Fund during the academic year, including overall demand, awards made and funding remaining available.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier where there is a material change to DfE guidance. The policy is approved by the Headteacher.

Policy approval

This policy has been reviewed and approved in line with the LGS Policy framework agreed by the Governing Board in July 2023.

Reviewed by	Director of 6th Form and School Business Manger	May 2026
Approved by	Headteacher	September 2026
Next Review	Director of 6th Form and School Business Manger	September 2028