



## Pendle Community High School & College Post 16 Bursary Policy

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### 1. Aims

Our school aims to:

- Have clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of 16 to 19 bursary funds
- Make clear to parents/carers and students the type of support that is available and the means of applying for it
- Make clear to parents/carers and students the attendance and behaviour conditions for receiving the funds

### 2. Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on the [16 to 19 bursary fund for the 2025 to 2026 academic year](#).

### 3. Definitions

- 'In care' is defined as: children looked after by a local authority on a voluntary basis (section 20 of the [Children Act 1989](#)) or under a care order ([section 31](#) of the Children Act 1989)
- 'Looked after child' is defined as: a child in the care of a local authority or who is provided with accommodation by the authority in the exercise of any functions for more than 24 hours ([section 22](#) of the Children Act 1989)
- 'Care leaver' is defined as:
  - A young person aged 16 and 17 who was previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16, or
  - A young person aged 18 or above who was looked after prior to becoming 18 for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16

### 4. Roles and responsibilities

#### 4.1 The governing board

The governing board has overall responsibility for approving this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy, but can delegate this to a committee, an individual governor or the headteacher.

In our school, monitoring the implementation of this policy has been delegated to the Chair of Governors.

#### 4.3 Staff

Our staff are responsible for implementing this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy consistently.

The senior leadership team (SLT) will provide staff with appropriate training in relation to this policy and its implementation.

#### 4.4 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to notify staff or the headteacher of any concerns or queries regarding the 16 to 19 bursary fund policy.

### 5. How we use the bursary fund

Financial support is available to eligible students from the 16 to 19 bursary. See section 6 below for details of our eligibility criteria.

The fund is intended to support students aged 16 to 19 in overcoming specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups; and
- Discretionary bursaries

We use the fund to provide students with support to fund:

- Transport
- Books
- Equipment
- Field trips and other course-related costs
- The costs of attending university interviews and open days

### 6. Eligibility criteria for the 16 to 19 bursaries

**Please note:** the following eligibility criteria will be assessed **in addition** to the individual student's actual financial needs. No student will automatically be awarded an amount of funding without an assessment of the level of actual financial need they have. Pendle Community High School & College may decide that although a young person may be eligible for a bursary because they are in one or more of the defined vulnerable groups, they do not have any actual financial need and so do not need support from the scheme. For example, their financial needs are already met and/or they have no relevant costs, i.e. a student in local authority care whose educational costs are covered in full by the local authority.

#### 6.1 Age

To be eligible for either bursary in the 2025 to 2026 academic year, students must be at least 16 years old but under 19 years old on 31 August 2025.

#### 6.2 Eligible education provision

Students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (e.g. Ofsted). The provision is funded directly by the ESFA or by the ESFA via a local authority;

#### 6.3 Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in the [ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision](#).

## 6.4 Asylum seekers

Accompanied asylum seekers under 18 with an adult relative or partner, and asylum seekers aged 18 and above are entitled to education but are not entitled to public funds. If necessary, they can apply to the Home Office for suitable housing and cash for essentials.

We will provide in-kind support such as books, equipment and a travel pass to asylum seekers who have not had asylum refused.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children:

- Are the responsibility of the local authority;
- Are to be treated as 'looked after' children; and
- Are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups, where they have a financial need

When these students reach 18-years-old, we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary as a student from a defined vulnerable group if the asylum claim is in their favour and will be treated as a 'care leaver' until they reach the upper age limit.

## 6.5 Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups

Students with a financial need, who meet 1 of the following 4 criteria below, in addition to the criteria outlined in sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 above, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups.

The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- In care (NB: those who are privately fostered are not classed as looked after);
- Care leavers;
- Receiving Income Support (IS) or 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; or
- Receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIPs) in their own right, as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right

UC has now replaced IS, as well as other benefits above, for current and future young people aged 16 to 18. However, students aged 19 to 25 and funded from the 16 to 19 budget (19+ continuers and students with an EHC plan) may still receive the legacy benefits listed above.

Students who meet the criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups are not automatically entitled to a bursary. Students will not receive the bursary if they do not have any actual financial need (for example, because their financial needs are met from other sources and/or because they have no relevant costs).

Where a bursary is provided, the funds will generally be up to £1,200 per year for study programs lasting 30 weeks or more. When calculating the amount, cases will be looked at individually and the outcome based on a particular student's needs. Students will only receive the amount they actually need to participate and will not automatically receive £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

We can use our discretion, on a case-by-case basis, and provide more than £1,200 per year if such would be necessary in all the circumstances for the student to remain in education. Any such additional payment will be paid either from our discretionary bursary allocation or our own funds.

If a student's study program lasts for less than 30 weeks, they will be paid a pro-rata amount. We will also consider the number of hours involved in a student's study programme when deciding whether a pro-rata payment is more appropriate.

We will review the student's eligibility position each academic year. Students will only continue to receive a bursary for vulnerable groups if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

We will provide this support for students from the bursary fund by making payments in kind where possible. It will not be provided as regular payments for living costs.

## 6.6 Discretionary bursaries

In addition to the criteria outlined in sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 above, students can apply for a discretionary bursary who are able to demonstrate financial hardship arising from other reasons.

In assessing any application for a discretionary bursary, we will consider:

- Level of household income
- Distance to travel between the student's home and the institution, or a location for a placement
- The number of dependent children in the student's household
- The requirements of their study program
- Whether the student has additional responsibilities that may mean they need extra help

There is no set limit for the amount of discretionary bursary that can be awarded to students. We will base all decisions around which students receive a discretionary bursary, and how much bursary they receive, on each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need.

We will review the student's eligibility position each academic year. Students will only continue to receive a discretionary bursary if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

## 6.7 Evidence

All applications for 16 to 19 bursaries must be supported by appropriate evidence. Examples of acceptable evidence we may request are:

- A copy of the UC or IS award notice, in the student's name
- Written confirmation of the student's current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority
- A copy of the UC claim from Department of Work and Pensions

## 7. Application and payment process

### 7.1 Applications

Applications should ideally be submitted by the end of September to allow enough time for our school to assess the overall level of demand and make discretionary awards on a fair basis. This date will be clearly stated on the application form.

However, we acknowledge that students' circumstances may change and therefore the application process will remain open for the whole school year.

Applicants will be notified in writing (either via email or via letter) whether their application has been successful, together with the amount of funding awarded. If a student wishes to appeal the outcome of their application for a bursary, they must follow the school's complaints procedure.

### 7.2 Payment process

Payments are made using the following process:

### 7.3 Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments

Payments of the bursary are conditional on students meeting the following conditions in relation to their standards of attendance and behaviour:

Insert details of standards/conditions, such as:

- Students must have attended at least 6 sessions per week (out of a maximum of 10) to be authorised and claim a payment. Consideration will be given to attendance that might be caused by illness, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances.
- Students must not have **any unauthorised absence** within the week, otherwise no payment is due.
- Work experience – if completed the bursary is paid for the 2 weeks of work experience.

- Students on residential trips will be deemed to be educated offsite and will receive the bursary payments.

All students are required to sign a declaration confirming that they agree to these conditions.

Students who fail to meet these conditions may have their payment withheld, but we will always take students' individual circumstances into consideration. This includes considering the impact on attendance that might be caused by illness, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances.

We will stop payments where students have been absent for a period of 4 continuous weeks or more (excluding holidays) and where students have decided to withdraw from a study programme.

We reserve the right to take back money from students where it is not spent for the reasons it was awarded.

We will consider the impact of such an action on the individual student before taking a final decision to do so, and any decision will be confirmed to the student in writing.

## 8. Change in circumstances

If there are changes in circumstances that may affect eligibility for a bursary, applicants and/or parents/carers must notify the school without delay.

## 9. Record keeping



Any paperwork and documents we retain for audit purposes (for example, copies of application forms, documents as evidence and any agreements signed by students) will be kept securely in line with our data protection policy, privacy notices and record retention schedule.

## 10. Unspent funds

Funding for discretionary bursary funding cannot be carried forward for more than 1 year. Unspent funding must be reported to the ESFA using the [online enquiry form](#), specifying the amount of funding and the year/s it relates to, no later than 31 March each year. The ESFA will recover all unspent funds.

## 11. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the School Business Manager annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Chair of Governors.

<b>Policy approved by governors:</b>	June 2025
<b>Review Date:</b>	June 2026
<b>Signed:</b> T Ashton, Chair of Governors	
<b>Signed:</b> D Grogan, Head Teacher	



## Application Form for the 16-19 Vulnerable Student Bursary

### Student's Details

Name:

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Home Address

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---

Post Code

---

Daytime Telephone Number

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Date Of Birth

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**Bank Account Details** (Please note payments can only be made to an account held in the name of the student unless a genuine reason has been given in the box at the bottom of this page)

Full Name of Account Holder

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Branch Sort Code

---

Bank Account Number

---

Bank Address (branch where  
account is held including  
postcode

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Comment (i.e. the reason the student does not have own bank account):

<p><b><u>VSB (Vulnerable Student Bursary)</u></b></p> <p>A bursary of £1200 for <b>students</b> who are either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ In care (NB: those who are privately fostered are not classed as looked after);</li><li>➤ Care leavers;</li><li>➤ Receiving Income Support (IS) or 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; or</li><li>➤ Receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIPs) in their own right, as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right.</li></ul>	<p>Please tick as appropriate</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
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## Supporting Evidence

In order to progress your application please attach any supporting documents i.e. a Universal Credit monthly award notice, where appropriate (If the student is in care and school is already aware– no supporting documents will be needed).

<b>VSB (Vulnerable Student Bursary)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An official letter from the Benefits Agency setting out the benefit to which the young person is entitled.</li><li>• Written confirmation of the young person's current or previous looked-after status, from the local authority which looks after them or provides their leaving care service.</li></ul>	Please tick as appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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I confirm that the information on this application is true and accurate. Please note if the student is not able to sign this form, please make sure that the parent/carer signs within the student's signature box and prints their name clearly in the box below.

Student's Signature:	Parent/Carer Signature:
Please Print Name:	Please Print Name:
Date:	Date:

<i>School use Only</i>	
<i>Approved:</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Declined:</i> <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Reason:</i>	