

Icknield School – “your journey matters”

16-19 Bursary Fund Policy

Article : 26 “My family should get the money they need to help bring me up”

Icknield School is passionate about providing an inclusive education. We value all students as unique and nurture their talents. We enable students to achieve to their best ability in a safe environment and to grow into the finest individuals they can be.

Our inclusive practice can be defined as attitudes, approaches and strategies taken to ensure that all our pupils are included in the learning environment. We ensure that all pupils are listened to, openly valued, safe and have the confidence to participate in all activities.

Icknield School strives to remove barriers to learning, to celebrate diversity and through this we encourage and support a society of equality, acceptance and mutual respect.

By valuing and respecting human diversity, Icknield School fosters a sense of community and belonging, enabling all: children, teenagers and adults, to participate in every area of life possible.

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund was introduced in the 2011 to 2012 academic year. It is money the government has given to local authorities, schools, colleges and other education and training providers (institutions) to give to disadvantaged students. Its purpose is to provide financial support to help students overcome specific barriers to participation, so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- a vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups
- discretionary bursaries that institutions award to meet individual needs. For example, transport, meals, books and equipment

This policy sets out how the Bursary Fund will be administered at Icknield School.

Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a 16-19 Bursary, the student must be aged 16 or over and under 19 on 31st August before the academic year in question.

Students must also satisfy the residency criteria set out in the *EFA Funding Guidance. (*A person on 1 September who is settled in the UK, and has been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands for the three years preceding the 1 September.*)

- **Vulnerable Bursaries**

Students in one or more of the groups below need more support and can apply for a vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200. The school will draw down the funds from the Student Support Bursary Service using the relevant claim form.

The eligible groups are students who are:

- in care or care leavers or
- getting Income Support (IS) or Universal Credit (UC) in place of Income Support *in their own right* or
- getting Employment Support Allowance (ESA) **and** Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments *in their own right*

Please note that to qualify as eligible for a vulnerable student payment the young person does not have to live independently of their parents. Further explanations of the different groups is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

Eligibility for a Vulnerable Bursary must be proven by relevant official documentation: letters from social services relating to young people in care or leaving care; letter confirming eligibility of nominated benefits above from relevant payment authority.

Once eligibility is proven and checked, the school will require completion of an application form and arrange for the funds to be drawn down on behalf of the student from the Student Support Bursary Service. Once received funds will be paid directly to the nominated bank account.

- **Discretionary Bursaries**

Discretionary bursaries are small awards (typically up to £100) made by the school to individual students. They are targeted on overcoming the individual barriers to participation a student faces.

A discretionary bursary **may** be awarded to students who are experiencing financial difficulty. The main criterion Icknield School uses to determine eligibility for this award, is eligibility for free school meals, as confirmed by Hampshire County Council. However, the school will consider applications from students who are not eligible for free school meals that can demonstrate household financial difficulty as evidenced by receipt of benefit and/or P60, Tax Credit Award notice or evidence of self-employment income. The actual bursary paid will depend on the funds available each year and the number of applicants to the fund.

Applications should be made in writing direct to the Head Teacher.

Decisions and appeals

Vulnerable Bursaries are only available to students in a narrow range of circumstances. If the external authorities do not deem the student to be eligible for the relevant benefit or designation, the student must appeal to the relevant authority and resubmit an application to the school once eligibility has been demonstrated.

The funds available for Discretionary Bursaries will vary from year to year. Students are only eligible for a payment if they are deemed eligible for free school meals or have proven hardship as evidenced by household documentation. They can appeal to the Headteacher over their proven household hardship or appeal to Hampshire County Council over eligibility for free school meals. If a student has launched such an appeal the school must be notified so that bursary money can be set aside pending the result of the appeal.

Appeals against decisions should be made in writing to the Headteacher. The appeal must be lodged within 5 working days of the decision letter being received and a decision regarding the appeal must be reached and communicated within 5 working days of the appeal letter being received.

Fraud

If the school is notified by the relevant funding agency that a student has been found to be fraudulent in their claim for free school meals or for income support, Universal Credit or Employment and Support Allowance, Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence payment, then the school will take steps to recover any money paid out under this fraudulent claim, including legal measures. Students claiming any benefit fraudulently should also expect to be prosecuted by the paying agency in question.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually taking into consideration amendments and updates received from the government for that academic year.