

Safeguarding Statement

Langley Park School for Girls is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Equality & Diversity Statement

Langley Park School for Girls is committed to valuing and celebrating diversity and promoting equality of opportunity for all its staff and students. We are working to create a learning and working environment which is free from prejudice, discrimination, intimidation and all forms of harassment including bullying. Respect for rights is at the heart of our planning, policies, practice and ethos and we expect all members of our school community to model this in their behaviour and relationships.

16 - 19 BURSARY FUND POLICY

Approval Body:	
Approval Date:	
Implementation Date:	
Designated Person (as appropriate):	Assistant Headteacher: Sixth Form
Committee with Remit (as appropriate):	
Review Date:	

Version History

Version	Approval Date	Summary of Changes
1.0	November 2015	Updated
2.0	September 2019	Updated
3.0	June 2021	Updated

Introduction

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in post-16 education.

There are two types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups
- Discretionary bursaries which schools award to meet individual needs

The school receives a set amount of Bursary funding that is then used to collectively support students eligible for bursary. Money is not 'ring fenced' for individual students.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to apply, a student must be aged at least 16 and under 19 years of age on 31st August in the academic year they start their course.

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). In this case, they may receive a discretionary bursary as long as their eligibility continues and the school considers they need the support to continue their participation.

Students must also meet the residency criteria in the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funding regulations for post-16 provision.

Types of Bursary

LPGS offer two levels of bursary:

Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups

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 (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
- receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right

The bursary for vulnerable groups can pay up to £1,200 per year to a student participating on a study programme that lasts for 30 weeks or more. Schools 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. This might be because their financial needs are already met and/or because they have no relevant costs. Institutions can refuse a student's application on this basis. Similarly, students should only receive the amount they actually need to participate and not automatically receive £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

In some cases, a young person might meet the eligibility criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups but their financial needs are already met, they have no relevant costs or do not need the maximum award. In these circumstances, schools can refuse the student's application.

Discretionary Bursaries

Discretionary Bursaries are available to students who fall into any one of the categories below:

- they have successfully claimed Free School Meals for the current academic year
- they have a family household income of less than £25,000
- they have a family household income of over £25,000 however special circumstances have been identified

Schools can make discretionary bursary awards to students to help them overcome individual barriers to participation. These will vary from student to student, depending on, for example, changes in household income, the distance they need to travel to the institution and the requirements of their programme of study.

What can the Bursary contribute towards?

- Books, resources or other equipment used for the individual programme of study
- Field trips, educational visits or specific enrichment activities relating to the programme of study
- Stationery
- Clothing or footwear in line with the Sixth Form dress code
- Electronic devices required for study
- Food on days you are at school
- A UCAS or employment application
- Essential travel (where the use of oyster is not accepted)
- Attending industry placements, university interviews and open days

In the case of items such as ICT equipment and textbooks, schools can specify that the student must return these at the end of their programme of study so they can be used again by another student where appropriate. If keeping equipment on site is the best way of ensuring this happens, institutions have the right to set this as a condition.

Schools set their own eligibility criteria in order to manage the number and size of discretionary bursary awards to keep within their budget. They also retain a small emergency fund from their allocation to support students who face exceptional circumstances during the year that impact on their ability to participate.

Conditions of funding

To be eligible for the bursary, the student must:

- be punctual to lessons and have above 90% attendance with no unauthorised absences
- conduct themselves in a professional manner within the school community

Students are required to inform the school of changes in their financial circumstances which may affect the bursary.

Schools will stop payments where students have been absent for a period of 4 continuous weeks or more (excluding holidays, or if there is evidence that the student intends to return) and where students have made a decision to withdraw from a study programme.

Procedure for Application

To make an application for the Bursary, students must complete an application form and return it to the Bursary Fund Administrator by the deadlines set. Deadlines will be very clearly communicated to students during the school year. Any forms received after the deadline, will be rolled over to the next claim period.

The form can be located on the school website:

<http://www.lpgs.bromley.sch.uk/692/16-19-bursary-fund>

Forms can also be obtained in paper form directly from the Bursary Fund Administrator. Evidence of eligibility is also required with the application (full details in the next section of the policy).

In November of each year, the Bursary Fund Administrator will organise a meeting of the Bursary Fund panel to consider each claim and make a decision in accordance with the fund guidelines.

Outcomes as to whether the student has been successful will then be communicated to all applicants. All successful applicants will then:

- receive a School Bursary Fund contract to complete and return confirming that they understand and agree to the conditions of the Bursary
- need to provide receipts of appropriate expenditure.

As long as the contract and receipts are received by the deadline set, payments will be made by the end of each half term.

Students will be written to each term to request further receipts of appropriate expenditure in order to authorise further payments. Failure to provide the evidence of appropriate expenditure within the deadlines set will result in payment not being made.

Appeals must be made in writing to the Head of Sixth Form within four weeks of the panel decisions, clearly stating the reasons for the appeal. An additional meeting of the panel may be called and additional evidence to support the appeal may be required. Please note, the school is bound by the terms and conditions of the grant and can only make awards to those who fully meet the eligibility criteria and who can provide original evidence. All information supplied will be treated in the strictest confidence throughout the process and all original documentation will be returned once the applications have been verified.

Students in receipt of the bursary in Year 12 must reapply (if they are still eligible) for the bursary in Year 13. Funding will not be offered in the absence of the completed application form and full evidence.

Evidence of Eligibility

At the point of application, schools are required to request sources of evidence of household income from each student and retain copies for audit purposes. For example:

- P60 Certificate
- Tax Credit Award Notice

- SA302 form (notice of tax calculation from the HMRC)
- Three most recent monthly award statements. The take-home pay figure in addition to the amount of Universal Credit after all deductions will give a total monthly income.
- For students who are in care or a care leaver, written confirmation of their current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority.
- For students in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit, a copy of their Income Support or Universal Credit award notice.
- For students receiving UC/ESA and Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments, a copy of their UC claim from Department of work and pension (DWP) and/or evidence of receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment.

Schools can only submit a funding claim to the Student Bursary Support Service (SBSS) for bursaries for vulnerable groups when they have seen and verified appropriate evidence to confirm that the student is eligible, and ensured the student needs financial support to participate.

Timing and Method of Payments

Payments are made to students five times a year at the end of each school half term with the first payment in December. Payments are made by bank transfer (via BACS) and students must ensure that they have a bank account in their name through which to receive funds.

Where appropriate, the Finance team may organise the payment to be credited to sQuid to be credited to the student's account to purchase items through the school (e.g. trips) or Finance may pay for things such as travel costs directly with the relevant company.

Your Right to Appeal

If a student or their family feel that a decision has been made about an aspect of the School Bursary payment that is unfair or wrong, they have the right to appeal via the school's complaints procedure. This is available on the school website and the Bursary Fund Administrator can explain the procedure. The complaint and all of the evidence connected with it, will be considered by the School Bursary Fund Panel. A decision about the complaint will be made and the student will be informed in writing about the reasons for the decision. This decision is then final.

Contact details for the Bursary Fund Administrators at LPGS are:

Ms Thompson: jt@lpgs.bromley.sch.uk

Mrs Bowry: nb@lpgs.bromley.sch.uk

Further Assistance

Should you not be eligible for the bursary but are facing financial hardship, please refer to our request for financial assistance form on our website:

<http://www.lpgs.bromley.sch.uk/466/key-information/category/24/charging-policy-and-financial-assistance>