

Leigh Academy Wilmington

16-19 Bursary Fund Policy

Last Review Date	Next Review Date
September 2025	September 2026

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Leigh Academy Wilmington - Bursary Fund Policy

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education. The bursary fund is intended to help students with their actual costs of participating, and bursary decisions are based on students' individual circumstances and their actual financial need.

Funding is provided by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and administered by the Academy. The Academy will assess each applicant's financial circumstances and award bursaries in line with ESFA's Bursary Fund Guide [here](#) and as set out in this policy.

Types of 16 to 19 bursary:

There are two types of 16 to 19 bursary:

- a bursary for students in one of the defined vulnerable groups
- a discretionary bursary for individual needs awarded by the Academy in line with ESFA guidelines

Vulnerable group bursaries

Vulnerable group bursaries are awarded to students who have financial need and are:

- in or have recently left local authority care;
- receiving Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves;
- receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in their own right as well as either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit in their own right

Students eligible for the vulnerable groups' bursary may receive up to £1200, depending on their circumstances and benefits. Students who meet the vulnerable group criteria are not entitled to a bursary if they do not have financial needs and/or their financial needs are covered from other sources.

Discretionary bursaries

Discretionary bursaries may be awarded to any student who requires financial support in accessing essential Academy materials or programmes. The Academy will assess each application and determine who receives a discretionary bursary based on individual circumstances and financial needs. The Academy will consider requests for:

- help with transport to and from school
- uniform
- books and learning equipment
- excursions
- costs of attending industry placements, work experience, university interviews and open days

Students can learn more about these bursaries [here](#).

Emergency Food

Institutions can use their bursary fund in individual cases of severe hardship, to provide food support whilst a student attends their study programme, for a student they consider to be in real need, without undertaking the checks on household income or gathering other evidence that would normally be required. We expect this to only apply to a very small number of the total 16 to 19 student cohort.

We do not expect this arrangement to continue on an ongoing basis for any individual student - institutions should exercise their discretion in each case and should be mindful that this flexibility relates to food support only.

Eligibility

To be eligible for any bursary, students must be at least 16 and under the age of 19 on 31 August of the awarding academic year. 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, or if they have an Education, Health, and Care Plan. Students must also meet the residency criteria in the ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision.

Application and Purchase request process

Bursary forms must be returned to the Post 16 office by 15 September 2025 to ensure receipt of any bursary funds in line with the dates advertised. Any applications received after 15 September 2025 will still be considered under the same criteria but any payments may be delayed.

Discretionary Bursary applications will be considered monthly and should be submitted by the 1st of each month for consideration that month. It will be reviewed by The Head of Post 16 and a Finance Officer. Students will be notified as soon as possible of the outcome.

Conditions

The Academy reserves the right to withhold the bursary if students fail to meet expectations for attendance and behaviour. Specific occasions include:

- If attendance drops below 95% without valid reason
- If the student receives a formal warning for poor behaviour or attendance
- If the student does not engage in academic support provided by the School to improve attainment
- If the student does not engage in pastoral support provided by the School to improve behaviour or attendance

Please be aware that the Academy will stop any payments where a student has been absent for a period of four continuous weeks or more (excluding holidays) and where students have decided to withdraw from a study programme. Where the Academy purchases books or equipment, students may be asked to return these at the end of their study programme.

Assessment Criteria

The Academy follows the ESFA's guidance in relation to eligibility criteria, and as part of that conducts a financial assessment of all applicant students. The evidence you will need to provide in relation to each bursary is clearly set out in the application form. The Academy is looking to establish that you are in financial need and, in relation to the discretionary bursary, that you need specific items or services relating to your education that you would otherwise need to pay for in order to participate.

The Academy bases its decisions in relation to both types of bursary award on students' individual circumstances and actual financial need. Awards will vary from student to student and will depend on, for example, household income, requirements of the study programme, distance required to travel to School and available transport options, the number of dependent children within a student's household, relevant participation needs, and any other relevant home circumstances.

Complaints

Any student or parent who is unhappy with the Academies handling of an application for bursary funding should contact the Sixth Form Team at post16@wilmingtonacademy.org.uk. Cases may be escalated to the Assistant Principal for Post 16.