Alfreton Park School

16-19 Bursary Policy

Date	Review Date	Headteacher's Signature
September 2026	September 2027	JODonnell
Governors minute number:	26/14	

Chair of Governors:
Headteacher: Josie O'Donnell
Deputy Headteacher: Emma Durham

Aims

The Bursary Policy aims to ensure that:

• Students facing financial hardship can access the appropriate financial support during their time at school to maximise participation and increase retention and achievement.

• The school fulfils its responsibility to ensure that bursaries are awarded appropriately in accordance with funding guidance and the aims of the scheme

Policy Statement

Alfreton Park School receives an allocation of funds from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to support eligible students funded by the ESFA with the costs of participating in education and training post 16.

Parents/students who apply for the bursary will be assessed individually and awarded support based on their financial need.

Please note:

- Bursaries are subject to available funds and eligibility does not guarantee entitlement to funds.
- Funds will be allocated to students who meet the eligibility criteria on a ‘first come first served' basis, with any funds that become available being reallocated to those on the waiting list.
- Bursary payments are subject to students maintaining satisfactory levels of attendance and behaving in line with school policies and procedures.
- Bursary awards only cover one academic year, and students must re-apply for support on an annual basis.

Bursary support provided through Alfreton Park School will take the form of the provision of services or equipment that will enable students to overcome some of the barriers to participation which they may face. Cash payments may also be deemed appropriate in a minority of situations.

The school is committed to doing everything it can to support its students, however bursary funding is limited and cannot be guaranteed. The bursary fund is not intended to support extra-curricular activities, costs not related to education, or to provide learning support and other services that the school might provide to students.

Application

Applications for financial support must be made in person by completing a paper-based form. Applications will only be processed from enrolled students as defined by the school.

All parents or guardians must submit their application as soon as possible as funds are limited and are awarded on a ‘first come first served’ basis. The only exception to this is students applying for the 16-19 Vulnerable Young Person Bursary, which is guaranteed for all eligible students.

All income and benefits (including Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit) are considered when calculating total household income. The school does not take into account Child Benefit, Disability Living Allowance, or Personal Independence Payments when calculating total household income

Assessment of Income

The assessment of income for all groups of students and, where applicable, the parents/guardians of students, will be made using clear and consistent criteria which takes into consideration the payments and payments in kind received from employment, benefits, and other sources, and will be clearly outlined in the application process. Applicants and, where applicable, their parents, will be responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the information used to assess eligibility.

Withdrawal and Clawback of Payment

Students are expected to meet minimum standards of attendance. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal or clawback of bursary payments. Where a student has been absent for a period of four consecutive weeks or more, excluding school holiday periods all payments of student support will be stopped.

Payments will restart when attendance restarts and meets agreed minimum standards. Wherever possible, support will be provided to students in the form of travel passes, equipment, access to trips, or vouchers for meals. Where Alfreton Park School believes a cash payment has been made in error or obtained by a student or their household by fraudulent methods, it will seek to claim back this payment by all methods up to and including the employment of external debt management agencies in order that this money can be employed in the support of other students.

16-19 Bursary

To be considered eligible for the 16-19 Bursary in 2026/27 the student must be:

- Resident in the UK for 3 years or more.
- Enrolled on a 16-19 study programme funded by the Department for Education or the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).
- Aged 16, 17, or 18 on 31st August 2026.
- Aged 19 and over and continuing a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuer).
- Have a household income of £35,000 or below.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund has three student priority groups:

Priority Group 1 – Vulnerable Young Persons Bursary
For students participating on a study programme that lasts for 30 weeks or more, priority for a bursary to a maximum value of £1,200 will be given to young people identified as a Vulnerable Young Person through the following criteria:#

- In care.
- Care leaver.
- Receiving Income Support or Universal Credit in their own name 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 Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Disability Living Allowance (DLA), as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit, in their own name.

Meeting one or more of the above criteria does not automatically mean that a student will receive a bursary or the full £1,200. All applications will be assessed individually,

taking into account the student's actual financial need and the costs they require support with in order to participate in their study programme.

Young people in Priority Group 1 may receive a combination of cash payments and support with direct course-related costs, meals and transport, up to a total award value of £1,200. Students will be awarded the level of support they need to participate, based on an assessment of the types of costs they have, and **will not automatically be awarded £1,200**.

Should the student require additional financial support over and above the standard meals, transport and course-related costs, an exceptional circumstances form must be completed before determining whether any additional support can be provided.

The Vulnerable Young Persons Bursary will not pay the costs of purchasing electronic equipment or devices such as laptops or tablets. Where applicable, students should seek advice from their social worker or speak to the school to enquire about the loan of a school laptop.
Evidence of eligibility for the Vulnerable Young Persons Bursary must be provided and retained to support an application. For students in care and care leavers, this must be a signed letter or email confirmation from a Local Authority appointed representative.

Priority Group 2 – 16-18 Discretionary Bursary (awarded to students with a household below £35,000)
A discretionary bursary may be given to young people aged 16-18 (at the start of the academic year) who face genuine barriers to staying in education and training and who have a household income of below £35,000. The school will make discretionary awards based upon a proven hardship need, which must be substantiated by evidence and will be retained in accordance with audit requirements..

Allocation of discretionary 16-19 funds will be prioritised as follows:

1. Costs directly attributed to a study programme, e.g., materials, uniforms, curriculum related trips, equipment to allow practical skills to be practiced and developed outside of school.
2. Subsidising transport costs for school attendance (if the student lives more than 2 miles from the school).
3. Support with the cost of meals in extenuating circumstances if the student is not entitled to Free Meals.

Successful awards will, where possible, be paid directly to the supplier. However, where a student has purchased an item and can evidence this, payment will be made directly to the student. All Priority Group 2 awards are subject to the availability of fund.

Roles and responsibilities

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.

The governing board also has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

In our school, responsibility for approving this policy has been delegated to the Headteacher

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

The headteacher
The headteacher is responsible for ensuring staff are familiar with this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy, and that it is being applied consistently.

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

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

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

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.

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 and (where applicable) parent'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

Application and payment process
Applications
Applications should ideally be submitted by 6th November 2026 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.

We acknowledge that students' circumstances may change and therefore the application process will remain open for the whole school year. The Headteacher of Alfreton Park School

has agreed a policy for the distribution of the funding which states that 5% of the total funding will be held back for administration and 10% of the total funding will be held back for applications that are received after the deadline of 6th November 2026 (i.e. change of circumstances & new students).

It is therefore vital that those who are eligible apply before the deadline to avoid a substantially lower ratio of funding. To be considered for the first round of Bursary Applications this deadline must be met and is non-negotiable.

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 parent/guardian wishes to appeal the outcome of their application for a bursary, they must follow the school's complaints procedure.

Payment process

Payments are made using the following process: In-kind payments such as transport costs, equipment or trip costs

Change in circumstances

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

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.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Rebecca Dallman – Head of Business and School Service annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the headteacher.