



# VYNER'S SCHOOL

## 16-19 BURSARY FUND

### GUIDANCE FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-2021

This fund has been given by the EFSA to schools and higher education institutions to enable students to overcome individual financial barriers to their participation in education. The Fund is aimed at 6<sup>th</sup> Form students only.

For eligible students, the fund can help towards the cost of essential course related costs such as travel to school, equipment, books, essential trips, specialist school clothing and attending university/job interviews. **Please note that bursary awards are paid entirely on the basis of financial need, not on a 'flat fee' basis.** Students must therefore specify as part of their application what costs they need support with. Bursary payments are not intended to meet normal household costs such as rent or non-specialist clothing.

#### GENERAL ELIGIBILITY

Students must be aged **over 16 years and under 19 years on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020** (students who turn 19 during the 2020-2021 academic year will continue to receive payments until the end of the academic year).

#### **AND**

Students must have a legal right of residency in the UK.

#### **AND**

Students must demonstrate a minimum attendance rate of 95%. Attendance will be monitored regularly and students failing to meet this standard will be asked to explain the reasons for their poor attendance. Payments will automatically be suspended in the case of students who fall below an attendance rate of 90%.

#### **AND**

Students must continue to make good progress in their studies and demonstrate an acceptable standard of conduct. If there are concerns over a student's attendance, progress or conduct, this will be discussed with them by their form tutor in the first instance.

Unaccompanied asylum seekers are treated as 'looked after children' by the local authority and may therefore apply for a bursary as a member of a 'vulnerable group'. Accompanied asylum seekers are not eligible under this scheme to receive a cash payment, but are encouraged to speak, in confidence to the school about their needs as we may be able to provide 'in kind' support such as books or equipment.

Students who are aged 19 or over at 31 August 2020 will only qualify for an award under the scheme if:

- They have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in place and are attending eligible education provision;
- Are a 19+ continuer i.e. they are an eligible student continuing a course they began age 16-18

Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for vulnerable groups.

### AWARDS TO 'VULNERABLE GROUPS' - UPTO £1200 PER ANNUM

The following students are defined as being in a 'vulnerable group':

- € Young people who are currently in care, or who are care leavers; **OR**
- € Young people who are unaccompanied asylum seekers and students in Local Authority provided foster care); **OR**
- € Young people who claiming Income Support/Universal Credit in their own name; **OR**.
- € Young people who are 16-19 and in receipt of both Employment and Support Allowance/Universal Credit and Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payment.

Applications that fall into this group are the highest priority group. and may apply for a bursary of up to £1200 per academic year. Award of a bursary is strictly dependent on proof of financial need and the School reserves the right to determine the appropriate amount of an award, dependent on the individual circumstances of the student.

The School may exceptionally choose to make an award of over £1200 per annum, if a student needs additional help to remain in education.

Students applying for a 'vulnerable group' award will be asked to provide proof of their eligibility as part of their application.

### DISCRETIONARY AWARDS

Students who are suffering financial barriers to their participation in post-16 education but who do not qualify as part of a vulnerable group, may apply for a discretionary award.

Discretionary awards are made purely on the basis of proven financial need, and will therefore vary from student to student. They may take the form of a small one-off award (e.g. to meet the cost of a particularly field trip) or, where the financial need is ongoing, the agreed award may be paid in instalments over the course of the academic year.

Students whose financial circumstances change during the course of the academic year (e.g. there may be as a sudden change in circumstances such as redundancy or a sudden drop in household income) are encouraged to apply whenever their need arises. A covering letter should be included with this application form, outlining the particular circumstances and providing supporting evidence.

The school will consider directly purchasing the support required by the student. This may be a transport pass, books, specialist equipment or a laptop / Chromebook. It may also include funding a place on a curriculum activity (e.g. field trip). If a laptop or Chromebook is requested, this will be purchased directly by the school and will be to a specification set by the school. The student will be responsible for the security of the device, and the school reserves the right to requests its return at the end of the course of study.

Discretionary awards are aimed at those students who do not meet the criteria for a vulnerable group's bursary, but the student's household is on a low income (i.e. below £16,190).

Should funds remain, the school will extend the payment of bursaries to households with an income **up to £25,000 pa**. Should there be more demand for bursaries than funds available, awards will be prioritised according to total household income, with the lowest incomes receiving an award first.

Household income may be low as a result of individual(s) being in receipt of an income-based benefit such as Income Support, Income based Job Seeker's Allowance, Working Tax Credit/Child Tax Credit, Income-based Employment and Support Allowance or the guaranteed element of State Pension Benefit. Where this is the case, please state this clearly on the application form.

All claims for the discretionary award require evidence of household income such as P60, copies of last 3 months of payslips, proof of self-employment income or proof of receipt of benefits. Letters supplied should be for the last financial year (if it is an annual return such as a P60) or dated within the last 3 months. A copy of an online Universal Credit statement for the last 3 months may also be submitted as evidence.

## OTHER INFORMATION

Previous eligibility for Free School Meals is not an automatic entitlement for the 16-19 Bursary, but will be taken into account as part of assessing an applicant's request for funding.

This is a cash-limited fund. The deadline for applications for payment in October is **Monday 21st September 2020.**

The amount of discretionary bursary paid each year may vary dependent on the number of applicants and the level of funding received. The school will review the operation of the scheme annually and may make changes to its operation.

Entitlement to a bursary in one academic year does not give an automatic entitlement in any subsequent academic years. Students must make a fresh application at the beginning of each academic year.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

If you wish to apply for a bursary you should:

- € Check that you meet both the general and specific eligibility criteria detailed above.
- € Complete a Vyners School 16-19 Bursary Fund Application Form, answering all questions in full to avoid delay when processing your application.
- € Attach copies of the required evidence as indicated on the form.

The School will assess all applications immediately after the closing date. All applicants for support will receive a letter informing them of the outcome of their application.

If it is approved, they will arrange for payments to be processed by the School Finance Team. Payments will be made, by BACS to the student's bank account. Eligible students should therefore ensure that they have a bank account into which payments can be transferred. Payments will be made in arrears and continued payment will be dependent on good attendance, academic progress and conduct.

## RIGHT OF APPEAL

Students who have not been awarded funding have the right to appeal. If you wish to appeal against a decision, please contact the Headteacher, in writing, within 7 calendar days of the date of your rejection letter. Your letter of appeal should state fully your reasons for appealing the original decision and enclosing such additional information as you feel supports your case. This may include letters of support from people who understand your situation. For example: a support worker, GP etc.

Appeals will be heard by a panel consisting of three Governors, including the Headteacher. Their decision will be final.