

NEWLANDS GIRLS' SCHOOL



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COURAGE COMMITMENT COMPASSION

16-19 Bursary Fund Procedure 2025/2026

“Pupils thrive at this exceptional school. They are incredibly proud to be a part of the inclusive and high achieving community. Pupils benefit from the very high aspirations that are set for their learning.”

Ofsted, May 2024

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1. Background

In March 2011, the Government announced a new 16-19 Bursary Fund scheme to provide financial assistance to those young people who face a financial barrier to continuing in education or training post the age of 16. The fund is made available from the government through its funding body – the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

This document sets out the arrangements for how Newlands Girls' School will prioritise and administer the 16-19 Bursary Fund in the academic year, 2025 / 2026. The school is committed to ensuring that the Fund is used to support financially disadvantaged young people taking up or continuing in their education or training post-16 and achieving their learning aim(s).

The 16-19 Bursary Fund is a limited fund determined by the ESFA. The total amount available for discretionary bursaries (see below) this year, 2025 to 2026, is £1793. The school retains 5% of the total amount in order to administer the fund. It retains a further 10% of the total fund to use as a hardship contingency fund to respond to exceptional or circumstantial in-year change. The contingency fund will be reviewed in April 2026 and any remaining funds will be distributed to eligible young people. The remaining 85% of the fund will be distributed to eligible students in the form of a discretionary bursary, as defined below. The school will make a separate application for funds for any student who meets the criteria for a Priority 1 Bursary.

2. Bursaries Available

There are two types of bursary available:

- A '**Priority 1 Bursary**' of up to £1,200 is available to all students who meet the general eligibility criteria as set out in this document and who have been identified as being most in need i.e. those individuals who meet the additional eligibility criteria for Priority 1 Bursaries set out in below. Students who meet the criteria will not automatically be awarded the full amount but rather will receive only the amount they actually need to participate in their Sixth Form studies.
- A '**Discretionary Bursary**' is available to any student who meets the general eligibility criteria as set out in this document and who meets the additional eligibility criteria for discretionary bursaries set out in below. There is no set limit for the amount of discretionary bursary that can be awarded to students: this will be decided based upon individual circumstances and actual financial need. The number and size of discretionary bursary awards will be managed to keep with the allocated budget.

3. General Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a bursary in the 2025/2026 academic year, a student must be aged 16, 17 or 18 years old at 31st August, 2025.

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'). These students can receive a discretionary bursary while they continue to

attend education provided that their eligibility continues and the school considers they need the support to continue their participation. Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for a Priority 1 Bursary.

Students must also meet the residency criteria in ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision which is detailed in full in the document *16 to 19 Bursary Fund Guide* : [16 to 19 Bursary Fund: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-overview)

This document also sets out the evidence that is required to confirm eligibility and details the national funding residency requirements including those for asylum seekers.

4. Additional Eligibility for Priority 1 Bursaries

Students who meet the criteria, and who have a financial need, can apply for a bursary for a Priority 1 Bursary. This reflects that these students are unlikely to be receiving financial assistance from parents or carers, so may need a greater level of support to enable them to continue to participate. Students will be awarded the amount 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. To be eligible for a Priority 1 Bursary, students must be:

- Currently or previously looked after (for a period of at least 13 weeks since the age of 14) by the Local Authority; and/or
- In receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit 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; and/or
- Receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments in their own rights, as well as either Employment & Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit in their own right.

5. Additional Eligibility for Discretionary Bursaries

Discretionary bursaries may be awarded to help students overcome the individual barriers to participation they face for example with the cost of travel, to buy essential books, equipment or uniform.

Students eligible for a Discretionary Bursary are defined as follows:

- Their **gross** annual household income, as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs, does not exceed **£22,000, even in receipt of Working Tax Credit**; and/or
- Where the student, or a sibling, qualifies for Free School Meals (FSM); and/or
- Where the student's parent/carer(s) are in receipt of one of the following:
 - Income support
 - Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
 - Income-related Employment & Support Allowance
 - Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

6. Contingency Eligibility / Exceptional Circumstances

Subject to the availability of funds, any student meeting the general eligibility requirements and facing financial hardship due to exceptional reason or change of circumstance can apply to access the contingency funds on an individual basis by submitting an application in writing. Any applications will be considered by the 16-19 Bursary Application Panel.

7. Evidence

All applications to the 16-19 Bursary Fund must be supported by the appropriate evidence. This evidence must be the original documentation which they school will then copy and retain in order to provide financial assistance as required. The originals will be returned to the applicant. All evidence will be treated as confidential and destroyed within 1 year of the student leaving the school.

Acceptable supporting evidence for the **Priority 1 Bursary** will be either:

- A statement from the Local Authority confirming the student's current or previous looked after status; or
- A recent Entitlement or Award Statement setting out the benefit to which the student is entitled;

Acceptable supporting evidence for the **Discretionary Bursary** will be either:

- *Part 1* of the latest Tax Credit Award Notice (TCAN) for the student's household. This document from HM Revenue & Customs details entitlement to Tax Credits and the total income for the year; or
- *P60 End of Year Certificate* for all adults in the student's household who contribute to household costs. This certificate is a statement of earnings from an employer. It must be for the correct adult(s) and for the correct tax year (to April 2024). The income will be shown as total for the year; or
- *Self-Assessment Tax Calculation (SA302)*. This is the equivalent of the P60 for self-employed people. It must be for the correct adult(s) and for the correct tax year (to April 2024); or
- Confirmation of entitlement to *Free School Meals (FSM)* through the online checking system which can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/rbwm>

8. Qualifying Condition Requirements

Eligible students are required to complete a qualifying learning period of six weeks before they are able to receive Bursary payments. Any eligible student, however, can make an application ahead of the six-week qualifying period and, in a case of extreme hardship, consideration will also be given for payment in advance of the six-week period.

All students in receipt of a Bursary must meet weekly punctuality and attendance requirements of 93% or above to ensure continued support. In addition, all students in receipt of a Bursary must adhere to the Sixth Form code of conduct and submit work of an appropriate level to the required deadlines. If a student does not meet these conditions, the school reserves the right to withdraw and/or suspend their Bursary payments. These conditions are the same as those expected of any student within the school.

9. Payments

Subject to meeting the qualifying condition requirements set out above, payments will be made in the following instalments, for both Priority 1 and Discretionary Bursaries:

- November 2025 (50%)
- January 2026 (30%)
- March 2026 (20%)

Payments will be made either by cheque made out to the student, or via Banker's Automated Clearing Services (BACS) to a bank account in the name of the student. The student must have a valid account in their name unless there are exceptional circumstances which mean an appointee has been named to manage her affairs.

10. Application

Applications for a Bursary must be made using the correct application form (see Appendix 1) and should be submitted in full by **30th September 2025**. Applications made after this date will be considered provided that sufficient funds are available. Once the 16-19 Bursary Fund has been used, however, it will not be possible to consider further applications.

Where a student is unable to make an application due to a level of learning difficulty and/or disability, consideration will be given to assisting them to do so. Consideration will also be given to assisting any student in making an application where they are not able to provide supporting evidence due to difficulties with engagement and/or support from the parents/carers.

11. Process

All applications for a Bursary or access to the contingency fund will be assessed by the 16-19 Bursary Application Panel, which is made up of:

- Head of Year
- Deputy Headteacher

The panel will review each application, supporting evidence and any other personal circumstantial evidence and the student will be notified of the outcome within **two weeks** of the panel meeting, and no later than **30th November 2025**.

12. Appeals

If any student or their parent/carer(s) are not satisfied with the outcome of their application, they should write to the Headteacher outlining their reasons. The Headteacher will convene a 16-19 Bursary Appeals Panel between the:

- Headteacher; and the
- Sixth Form Link Governor

The meeting will consider and respond to appeals within **two weeks** of receipt. If the appeal is upheld or partly upheld, it will be referred back to the 16-19 Bursary Application Panel with recommendations. If the appeal is not upheld, the appealing party will be signposted to the [School's Complaint Procedure](#).

13. Confidentiality

Applications and supporting evidence will be confidential to the 16-19 Bursary Application Panel and, in the event of an appeal, the 16-19 Bursary Appeals Panel. The applications and supporting evidence will remain confidential during processing, payment and storage. If it is necessary to obtain additional information in order to reach a decision, the student and/or their parent/carer(s) will be told the reasons why this is necessary prior to sharing any information further.

14. Change of Student's Financial Circumstances

Any student in receipt of a Bursary has a duty to inform the school in the event that their financial circumstances change, or if those of their parent/carer(s) change (e.g. an increase in household income that would affect a student's entitlement to Free School Meals). This does not necessarily mean future Bursary payments will be stopped, but rather it would result in a convening of the 16-19 Bursary Application Panel to determine whether the payments should be continued or stopped (in which case, the funds would be redistributed).

15. Student Transferring

Where a student who receives a Bursary transfers *out of the school* to another education and/or training provider in-year, the school will liaise with that provider to ensure the continuity of Bursary payments to enable the student to complete their learning aims.

Where a student who receives a Bursary transfers *into the school* from another education and/or training provider in-year, the school will liaise with that provider to ensure continuity of Bursary payments to enable the student to complete their learning aims.

16. Student Withdrawing

Where a student in receipt of a Bursary withdraws from the school and does not transfer to another education and/or training provider, Bursary payments prior to the date of the withdrawal will **not** be recovered but any scheduled payments to be made after the date of withdrawal will **not be made**.

17. Supporting Documents

In addition to this document being openly shared with all students and their parent/carer(s), the following documents are also used to support the 16-19 Bursary Fund:

- Application Form
- Information for Young People
- Information for Parent/Carer(s)
- Student Agreement

18. Information & Key Contacts

Further information on the 16-19 Bursary Fund can be found by following the link: <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

The 16-19 Bursary Fund Application Panel members can also be contacted for more information:

- Eve LeCuirot/Jo Bennett (Heads of Year)
- Lesley Allaway (Deputy Head)
- Andrew Morbey (Deputy Head)