**16-19 Bursary Fund Policy**

**Farmor's School 16-19 Bursary Fund 2026-2027**

Farmor's School has a bursary fund available to provide support for those sixth form students who qualify as vulnerable students and for others from low-income backgrounds. Its purpose is to provide financial support to help students remain in education.

This document is based on advice provided by the Department for Education (DfE), which provides the 16-19 Bursary Fund, and sets out how Farmor's School administers and distributes these bursary funds. It is divided into the following sections:

1. Eligibility
2. Applications
3. Payments
4. Appeals
5. Fraud

Farmor's School recognises that offering bursaries requires sensitivity and respect for all those concerned. All applications will be treated confidentially.

## 1. Eligibility

**1.1** There are two types of bursary and also Emergency Food support.

- ***Vulnerable Student Bursary*** – This is available if a student is in one of the defined vulnerable groups outlined in 1.2.1 below and needs financial support to remain in education and meets the conditions set out in points 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5 below.
- ***Discretionary Bursary*** – A student may receive a discretionary bursary if they need financial help in order to remain in education but do not qualify for a vulnerable student bursary. These discretionary bursaries may be available subject to financial and other circumstances as outlined in point 1.2.2 and points 1.3 to 1.5 below.

- ***Emergency Food*** – A student may be eligible for food support in cases of severe hardship whilst attending their study programme where real need is perceived and without the school undertaking checks on household income.

**1.2** Funds may be allocated to the following groups of students:

### *1.2.1 Vulnerable Student Bursary*

Those in care; care leavers; those 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 such as a child or a partner; those receiving both Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit and also Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments in their own right.

The maximum amount available as a Vulnerable Student Bursary is £1,200 a year for a student participating in a study programme which lasts for 30 weeks or more. If the student's study programme lasts for less than 30 weeks, the maximum amount which may be paid is proportionately reduced. The amount of funding received will, in addition, depend on the needs of the individual in order to participate in their programme of study.

### *1.2.2 Discretionary Bursary*

a) Band 1: Students whose household income is less than £16,190 per year may be eligible for support as outlined in 3.3.
b) Band 2: Students whose household income is between £16,190 and £20,817 per year may be eligible for support as outlined in 3.3.
c) Band 3: Students whose household income is between £20,818 and £25,521 per year might be granted funding to support specific learning needs, or a contribution towards bus fees of not more than £300 per annum.
d) Band 4: Students whose household income is between £25,522 and £30,000 might be granted a contribution towards bus fees of not more than £300 per annum.

Additional funding might be granted to students in the above categories who are faced with unforeseen changes in their circumstances.

### *1.2.3 Emergency Food*

Emergency food for 2026-27 is not subject to checks on household income but is available where the school considers there to be real need. It is expected to be a short-term arrangement. Students can apply for it on the Bursary Application form and this will be followed up by conversation with the Head of Sixth Form to determine need and support.

### *1.2.4 Free Meals*

Students may also make an application for free meals whilst enrolled at Farmor's School. A single check is made to establish eligibility for the duration of the 16-19 programme of study. Students will

also be asked to confirm that their household income circumstances have not changed on an annual basis. This is separate from the Emergency Food provision. Information about the eligibility criteria and details about how to make a claim for free meals are available from the local authority and on the school website.

### 1.3 Age requirements

**1.3.1** To be eligible to receive a bursary students must be aged 16 or over and under 19 on the 31 August in the academic year in which they start their programme of study. If a student receiving a discretionary bursary turns 19 during a programme of study begun when they were below 19 they can continue to receive the bursary to the end of the academic year in which they turn 19, or to the end of their programme of study, whichever is sooner provided that they continue to need financial support. Students over the age of 19 are also eligible for discretionary bursaries if they have a current Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

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

**1.3.3** In order to qualify for emergency food, students must meet the age criteria set out in paragraph 1.3.1 above. Students over 19 continuing a course of study begun when they were below 19 and students with a current ECHP are eligible for emergency food support.

### 1.4 Residence requirements

Students must satisfy the residency criteria as set out in DfE Funding Regulations for Post-16 provision 2026-27 which require the student to have a legal right to be resident in the United Kingdom.

### 1.5 Qualifying courses

Students must be studying a course that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (for example, Ofsted). The course must also be:

- funded directly by the DfE or by the DfE via a local authority; or
- otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) accredited by Ofqual or on the DfE list of qualifications approved for funding. All courses offered at Farmor's Sixth Form fulfill this requirement.

Bursaries will not be paid to students or young people on waged apprenticeships or other waged training.

The maximum payable to those receiving a Vulnerable Student Bursary is payable if their study programme lasts for 30 weeks or more and they need that level of support. Students on study programmes of less than 30 weeks will receive a *pro rata* amount. In determining the amount of a

Vulnerable Student Bursary, the school will take into account the number of hours per week involved in the study programme.

## 2. Applications and Assessment

**2.1** Farmor's School will make every effort to ensure that all those students qualifying for bursaries receive financial support. All students entering the sixth form will receive information about bursaries. This information is published on Farmor's School website and is provided to students as part of their sixth form induction programme, as well as highlighted during the course of Sixth Form events. All sixth form students are entitled to apply for a bursary if they meet the criteria set out in section 1.

**2.2** Any student applying will be asked to complete a confidential application form and provide evidence of their household income and of their eligibility for the bursary applied for. This will include (where relevant) P60; notice of benefits received; Income Support or Universal Credit Award Notice; evidence of self-employment forms or other relevant documents. Original documents will need to be provided in full. The school will take and keep copies.

**2.3** Students who are in care or care leavers must provide written confirmation of their current or previous status from the local authority which looks after them or provides their care leaving services. The Income Support or Universal Credit Award Notice provided by students receiving these benefits must clearly state the claim is in the student's name and that they are entitled to the benefits in their own right without conditions preventing them from participating in further education or training. In such cases the school will also need to see a tenancy agreement in the student's name, utility bills, children's birth certificates and so on. Students receiving Universal Credit or Employment and Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments should provide evidence of their Universal Credit claim from the Department of Work and Pensions as well as evidence of receipt of those allowances.

**2.4** An applicant for a Vulnerable Student Bursary may also apply for a Discretionary Bursary if their financial circumstances are such that they need to do so in order to remain in education.

**2.5** All applications, complete with relevant evidence, must be received by the Sixth Form Pastoral Administrator by **Monday 21st September 2026**. Students will be informed of the result of their application by **Friday 23rd October 2026** and any payments awarded back dated to **Thursday 3rd September 2026.**

**2.6** If a student's circumstances change, or they realise that they are eligible, they can make an application at any time in the school year. Decisions on Bursaries are made by the Bursaries Panel which comprises the Head of Sixth Form, and the School Business Manager.

**2.7** All applications for a bursary are assessed individually on the basis of the individual student's personal circumstances and their actual financial need for support to remain in education. In some

circumstances a student might meet the eligibility requirements for a bursary for vulnerable students but as their financial needs are fully met, they have no relevant costs needing bursary support.

**2.8** In considering applications, the school may take into account other factors, such as distance to travel, number of dependent children as well as the student's participation needs.

## 3. Payments

**3.1** Payments to students will be made in different ways according to the bursary allocation.

**3.2** Those students who qualify for a Vulnerable Student Bursary will receive a bursary of up to £1,200 a year. This is paid in cash instalments fortnightly into their bank account.

**3.3** Those students who qualify for a Discretionary Bursary will receive cash payments or other support in kind to assist them in financing their studies. Examples of these include contributions to travel passes, meals, course materials and trips essential to the student's study programme. These are items the student would otherwise have to pay for to participate in their study programme. Assistance in kind means instead of getting money, a student could get a travel pass, meal credits on the school's cashless catering system, books or course equipment. The monetary value of their bursary will be determined and allocated each term and there will be a discussion with the student about how best to allocate these amounts to support them. If students wish the cheque or bank transfer can be made payable to a parent. If the payment is a contribution for a travel pass, books or equipment bought by the school on the student's behalf, the student can agree to a transfer being made to cover this expenditure.

**3.4** Students who qualify for Emergency Food will be given a daily allowance on the cashless catering system to use against the cost of food to be bought in school.

**3.5** Students who join the school later in the academic year and are awarded a bursary will receive pro rata payments.

**3.6** Students who receive support in the form of books or equipment should return them in a good condition at the end of their course to enable them to be used by other students.

**3.7** All bursary funds are available to help a student pay for things they need to stay in education. Farmor's can therefore direct what the funds should be spent on and, for example, can require that bursary funds are spent on travel costs, meals during the day, or equipment, or any other support that has been identified as necessary to enable the student to benefit from their education. This includes extracurricular trips which are essential to the study programme. Bursary funds are not provided to support ordinary living costs or extra-curricular activities generally.

**3.8** In exceptional circumstances, an application for additional support can be made during the year by a Head of Department, to directly support any student experiencing financial barriers to participation in their subject. Each application will be reviewed by the Head of Sixth Form and School Business Manager and awarded on merit and will be dependent on funds still being available within the bursary fund for that year.

## 4. Additional requirements for payment

**4.1** All students awarded bursaries must meet certain requirements to receive their payments. These requirements are the same as those for all sixth formers and are:

**Attendance**: students are expected to have 100% attendance in lessons and registration in line with Farmor's School's attendance policy. Any absences must be authorised. If unauthorised absences rise above 10%, then the school reserves the right to reduce bursary payments. If a student cannot attend school because of illness or other exceptional circumstances they must notify the school so that the absence can be authorised for the necessary period. A student who is continuously absent for four weeks or more (excluding holidays) without authorisation or who leaves school before the end of the academic year will no longer receive payments.

**Behaviour**: all students are expected to achieve 'Expected Effort' grades in their reports.

**4.2** Failure to meet the attendance and effort requirements of all Sixth Formers may result in bursary payments being reduced proportionally in relation to the level of unauthorised absence and below expected effort per subject area.

**4.3** Apart from Vulnerable Bursary students who are paid fortnightly, payments will be made half-termly in arrears.

**4.4** Each award is assessed when reports are issued to students and parents against effort and attendance as shown in the table below:

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lesson Attendance (assessed on two thirds of the bursary allocation)</td><td colspan="2">Effort on each Progress Review Point (November, March, June) and assessed on one third of the bursary allocation</td></tr>
<tr><td>Attendance %</td><td>Deduction %</td><td>Number of subjects where effort is below expected levels</td><td>Deduction %</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">80 ≤ a < 89%</td><td rowspan="2">-20%</td><td>0</td><td>0%</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>-20%</td></tr>
</table>

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2 | -30% |
| 70 ≤ a < 79% | -30% | 3 | -40% |
| 60 ≤ a < 69% | -40% | 4 | no payment |
| <60% | no payment | | |

**5. Appeals**

**5.1** Students are entitled to appeal against decisions made in relation to their application for a bursary or the withholding or reduction of payments.

**5.2** Any student wishing to appeal should first raise their concerns with the Head of Sixth Form. If the matter cannot be resolved informally with the Head of Sixth Form they should follow the school's Complaints Policy, writing formally to the Headteacher in the first instance.

**6. Fraud**

**6.1** Fraudulent claims for bursary allocations will be treated very severely.

**6.2** Students or their families will be asked to confirm that all information provided when they apply for a bursary is correct and complete.

**6.3** Students found to make fraudulent claims will be required to refund all payments received and in the event of funds not being recovered by the school, will be reported to DfE.