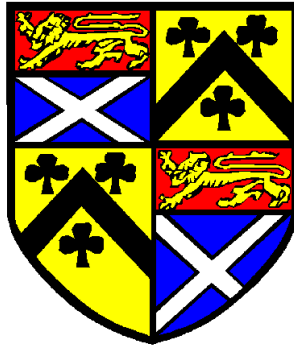


The Rochester Grammar School
16 – 19 Bursary and Discretionary Fund Policy 2015/2016
THE ROCHESTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL



16 – 19 Bursary and Discretionary Fund Policy

The Mission statement:

‘Transforming Life Chances’

This will be evident through:

- Students being provided with aspirational learning opportunities;
- Students becoming part of the global thinking community;
- Teachers supporting and challenging each student to excel to reach the best destinations;
- Parents supporting and contributing to the ethos and life of the school;
- Governors being critical champions of the school

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Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is:

1. to ensure that the funds received annually from the EFA (Education Funding Agency) are targeted towards students that have the greatest need;
2. to ensure that any remaining funds are distributed fairly to students whose household income may limit their educational chances;
3. to provide a managed system that demonstrates a fair transition between EMA and EFA bursaries which will be operating contemporaneously;
4. to ensure financial sustainability through the flexible devolvement of EFA funds received, thereby preventing an overspend in any annual cycle of funding;
5. to ensure that any personal financial details remain secure and confidential;
6. to minimize the risk of fraudulent claims.

Government Bursary Fund

A finite figure was devised by the EFA using an estimation figure of the number of students in 2009/10 who were eligible for the maximum EMA payment x £190. As such, Level One students (defined below) were to receive an annual bursary of £1200 and the remainder was to be shared amongst other eligible Level Two students (defined below). In addition to this, a 5% administrative cost was to be applied and a discretionary hardship fund created. To provide for these latter costs, 15% was withheld from the grant and the annual bursary for Level Two students were calculated according to the formula:

Annual EFA grant minus 15% then minus (£1200 x no of eligible Level One students) = remainder divided by number of eligible Level 2 students (up to a maximum of £800). Eligible late applicants (due to changes in household circumstances) will be provided for through the 10% retained to support the discretionary hardship fund.

The same formula is being used for 2015/2016 period.

16 – 19 Bursary applications (from September 2015)

Eligibility

To receive a bursary the student must be aged under 19 on 31 August in the academic year in which they start their programme of study and must satisfy DFE residency criteria.

The student must satisfy the following school conditions:

- 1) The student's level of attendance must be a minimum of 95%
- 2) The Student must not have broken the terms of the Sixth Form Contract (Learning Agreement)

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- 3) The student must comply with the bursary agreement document
- a) No mark lower than 2 for effort: Focus, Participation, deadlines and home Learning for each subject in the Sixth Form Review/Contract and/or Sixth form Report
 - b) Have attended all internal and external examinations
 - c) Have submitted all coursework assignments on time and to the best of their ability, as judged by the subject teacher.
 - d) Not to be late for more than one session in a week.

Evidence requirement: evidence of household income by way of a P60, Working Tax Credit annual statement from HMRC, Receipt of Benefit Notification, Tax Credit Award Notification or Self Employed Income Notification must be provided to the school Finance Office along with the completed application form.

Level One: Guaranteed Bursary

These students will receive £1200 per year. Level 1 students are:

- A Student in Care
- A Care Leaver
- Student in receipt of Income Support
- Disabled student in receipt of employment and support allowance who is also in receipt of disability living allowance.

Level Two: Shared Residual Allocations

These students will receive a figure not exceeding £800 per annum and calculated annually according to the availability of funds divided by the number of eligible applicants by the September closing date. This may entitle them to a small bursary or enable the school purchase educational items on their behalf. Such payments could include IT equipment, educational equipment, free school meals, transport costs etc. The amount will be dependent on the number of applications for assistance and the total bursary fund provided by the Government to the school.

To be able to make application for this funding students will have to prove that they meet some or all of the following criteria in the form of appropriate supporting documentation.

That they or their parent(s) are on income support or other means tested benefits

- That they fulfil UK residency conditions
- That the total family income is less than £20,817 for the last financial tax year.
- That they were eligible for free school meals last year.

Applications Deadline Date: 25th September 2015

In Year applications Date: 15th Monthly (subject to funds being available)

Discretionary Fund

As an alternative to weekly payments, The Rochester Grammar School will operate a discretionary payment system for specific educational purposes such as: books & equipment; transport, meals in school, examination re-sit fees; University application (UCAS) fees; costs of travel to HE interviews; educational visits (including residential). In most cases, no money will be given directly to students; payments or purchases will be made on their behalf. The maximum claimable, within any academic year, will be capped at £200 per student (subject to funds being available).

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This fund will be provided through the initial 10% top-sliced from the annual YPLA grant. It will then be topped up with any monies that are not awarded through the weekly payments to either Level One or Level Two students who fail to meet the terms of the Bursary contract.

Eligibility will be determined via formal application and will provide for students whose identifiable financial need does not fall into Levels 1 or 2 above. Each claim will be assessed separately and funds may be awarded on either a match funded or full cost basis.

Application Process and Payments

All Bursary Fund applications are to be made to the Finance Office by the 25th September 2015, along with the required evidence. In year applications will be considered and applications to be with the finance officer by the 15th of each month. In year applications would be subject to funds being available.

The Rochester Grammar School will then process the information and will advise students, in writing, of the outcome. All eligible bursary payments will be attendance and achievement related and back-dated to the start of the courses the student has enrolled upon.

It is envisaged that most payments will be made direct to a student's nominated bank account once receipts have been verified. Payments will subject to the conditions laid down in the 16 – 19 Bursary Contract, including attendance, behaviour, completion of coursework and completion of courses enrolled upon.

Once entitlement is approved, a separate 16-19 Bursary Contract will be signed by the claimant and witnessed by the Assistant Headteacher: Sixth Form.

Security of personal information

All applications will be made through the Finance Office. All personal information, including bank details and household earnings, will be stored securely and will remain strictly confidential.

Internal Appeals Process

Students have a right to appeal against a decision if they have evidence that the school has made a mistake and that they have behaved in accordance with the terms of the 16–19 Bursary Fund contract. Appeals should be made to Mr G Bassan (Principal) in the first instance. If a further appeal is to be requested then this will be heard by a Governor's sub-committee of 2 members including: a school governor and a neutral member of staff.

Fraud

Parent/Carer and student must confirm that all information provided is true and must notify The Rochester Grammar School if any circumstances change. The bursary will be provided on the basis that certain conditions set by the school, as detailed in the Bursary Contract, will be adhered to. Parents and students will be required to jointly sign applications so that they understand that money may be claimed back and eligibility withdrawn should they knowingly provide information which is discovered to be false.

This policy was reviewed on 25th August 2015 and will be reviewed annually.