

## Lady Manners School

### 16-19 Bursary Fund

#### 1. Outline of the 16-19 Bursary Fund

Lady Manners School 16-19 Bursary Fund is aimed at providing assistance to students whose access to, or completion of, education is inhibited by financial constraints or barriers. It is targeted towards those young people who face the greatest financial barriers to participation; such as the costs of transport, meals, books and equipment.

The LMS 16-19 Bursary Fund has three elements:

- **Defined Vulnerable Groups Award** – (up to £1,200 per academic year) payable to students who are:
  - in care
  - care leavers
  - in receipt of income support or Universal Credit in their own name
  - disabled and in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance (or Personal Independence Payments) in their own name
- **Discretionary Award - Level 1** – (up to £4 per school day during this academic year: that is 190 school days for a Year 12 student, and 175 school days for a Year 13 student) payable to students who are:
  - in receipt of Free School Meals
  - living in a household where annual income does not exceed £16,385 (i.e. in receipt of Income Support/Universal Credit, Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Related Employment Support Allowance, support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, the guarantee element of State Pension Credit, Child Tax Credit).
- **Discretionary Award – Level 2** – (up to £1.80 per school day during this academic year: that is 190 school days for a Year 12 student and 175 school days for a Year 13 student) payable to students who are:
  - living in a household where annual income is between £16,386 and £21,012

Payments in respect of the Defined Vulnerable Groups and Discretionary Awards will be made directly into students' bank accounts on a monthly basis and will also be subject to them satisfying certain conditions (see Section 5 below). The monthly payment will be calculated based upon the number of school days per calendar month and will be paid one month in arrears.

For students in receipt of the above awards, the Bursary Fund can also contribute towards specific items *related to their programme of study*, such as trips, sketchbooks, revision guides, and UCAS fee where applicable, and if requested by the student. Trips will be subsidised to a limit of 30% of the cost of the Trip, and to a total annual limit of £250 per Bursary Student where multiple trips occur due to the subject combination taken. Depending on a student's individual circumstances, further help may also be available from the Bursary Fund, and may include equipment loans, where the Pastoral Team feel these are reasonable and appropriate for the student concerned.

- **Hardship Award** – Payable in exceptional circumstances to any student experiencing particular financial hardship during their studies. These are 'one-off' payments which will be assessed on a case by case basis. All applications will be reviewed by the Sixth Form Pastoral Manager in the first instance and students may be requested to discuss the details of their circumstances with the Pastoral Manager in order to assess the level and type of support required. The provision of actual support or its level cannot be guaranteed.
  - Students already in receipt of the monthly Defined Vulnerable Groups Award or Discretionary Award may apply for a Hardship Award at any time (for items not already covered above) and do not need to provide further evidence of household income or benefits received.

- Students who do not meet the criteria for the Defined Vulnerable Groups Award or the Discretionary Award may apply for a Hardship Award at any time but evidence of household income or benefits received should be supplied where possible.
- Students may apply for more than one Hardship Award throughout the academic year, although previous applications will be taken into account when assessing the level of support available.

Payment can also be made as a 'payment in kind'. The following items are examples of what might be considered: provision of textbooks, materials, subsidy towards a school trip, UCAS fees.

## 2. Assessment of Eligibility

- Students should be aged under 19 on 31 August in the academic year in which they start their programme of study and satisfy the Education Funding Agency's residency criteria in order to be eligible for payments under the bursary scheme.
- The school will be entitled to ask for evidence of household income or benefits received if the student is not on the Free School Meals register (e.g. a letter from HMRC or DWP, P60s, Income Support, Tax Credit notifications etc.).
- When assessing students' eligibility for payments, the school may need to consult with a range of external agencies. The Pastoral Manager may also need to consult with a range of school staff when assessing applications for Hardship Awards. However, in all cases the school will deal with applications sensitively and in accordance with Data Protection guidelines.
- Eligibility for payments from the Lady Manners School Bursary Fund will be re-assessed in each year of the student's programme of study.

## 3. Operation of the Fund

- The school may retain up to 5% of the annual allocation to meet administration costs.
- Each year the school will ensure there is an allocation of funds sufficient to cover the cost of one-off 'hardship' awards and a contingency to allow the school to make monthly 'defined vulnerable groups' or 'discretionary' awards to students who may not have been eligible at the start of the academic year and whose circumstances change mid-year, or for eligible students who join the school mid-year.
- The administrative arrangements of the Lady Manners School 16-19 Bursary Fund will be reviewed throughout the year and may be subject to change at the discretion of the school.
- The eligibility criteria for payment of the 'discretionary' and 'hardship' elements of the Lady Manners School 16-19 Bursary Fund will be reviewed throughout the year and may be subject to change at the discretion of the school.

## 4. Application Deadlines

- **Applications for 'defined vulnerable groups' and 'discretionary' awards** – Applications may be made at any time during the year, but in order for the monthly payments to be backdated to September, completed applications and all necessary supporting documentation, should be received in school by 31 October. The school will use its discretion regarding backdated payments for any applications received after this date.
- **Applications for 'hardship' awards** – Applications may be made at any time during the year although payments will be subject to available funding.

## 5. Conditions

- The school has the discretion to set certain conditions for the payment of awards from the Bursary Fund.
- Attendance will be monitored in line with the Sixth Form Attendance Guidelines. The Defined Vulnerable Groups and Discretionary Awards are paid on the condition that full attendance is achieved. Any absence which is not related to an authorised educational activity is likely to result in a deduction from the monthly bursary payment, although the school will use its discretion on a case by case basis for absences beyond the student's control.
- The school has the discretion to stop or reduce the monthly bursary payment if it sees fit. Possible reasons could include:
  - Persistent failure to comply with any of the expectations or requirements of the Sixth Form (e.g. attendance, uniform, behaviour, completion of coursework);
  - Absence from an external examination without good reason;
  - Failure to return textbooks or other property belonging to the school.
- These conditions will be reviewed annually by the school and may be subject to change.

## 6. Payment Decisions

- Students will be informed in writing whether their application for a bursary has been successful or not. If successful, students will be provided with details of each monthly payment date.
- After the end of each month, the Sixth Form Pastoral Manager will make an assessment of whether the conditions set out in Section 5 above have been met by each eligible student.
- Students may be asked to provide additional information in respect of fulfilling the above conditions. If this information is not forthcoming, payment may be withheld.
- Students will be informed by letter if their payment has been stopped or reduced and will be provided with the reason for the decision.
- The Pastoral Manager will provide a list of payment decisions to the Finance Team no later than the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.
- Payments will normally be made on the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month. Where the 25<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend or bank holiday, payment will normally be made on the nearest working day before.
- The school will maintain a database of students receiving bursary payments for audit and management information purposes. Eligibility will also be recorded on the student's file.

## 7. Appeals Procedure

- Students whose applications are unsuccessful will have the right to appeal using the school's published Complaints Procedure.
- Students who are informed of a 'non-payment' decision will be given the opportunity to question the reason for the stoppage or provide more information to the Pastoral Team. If this fails to resolve the issue, the student will have the right to appeal using the school's published Complaints Procedure.

## **8. Fraud**

- The application form will include a declaration statement to confirm that the information provided by the student, parent or guardian is true, that they will notify the school if their circumstances change, that they understand that the bursary will be provided on the basis of certain conditions set by the school and that they understand that money may be claimed back if they give information that they know to be false.
- Fraud is a serious offence. Students found to be acting fraudulently in any way will be dealt with appropriately, either as part of the school's internal discipline procedures under the Behaviour Management Policy, or by the involvement of external agencies.