



400 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

16-19 Bursary Policy

Policy approval date	March 2026
Policy review date	March 2027
Policy Lead	Lucy Gallagher, Deputy Headteacher
Governor or SLT approval	Governor Approval
Governor committee responsible for policy	Finance

Statement of Intent

At Richard Hale School we are committed to closing the attainment gap between pupils from poorer and more affluent backgrounds, and ensuring that every young person participates in, and benefits from, a place in 16-19 education and training.

We are dedicated to:

- Distributing 16-19 bursaries via a fair and equal process that is transparent, accountable and easily understood
- Ensuring that information regarding the application to 16-19 bursaries is publicly available via the school website, the Sixth Form Communications Officer and the Sixth Form Welfare Officer
- Widening access to, and participation in, Sixth Form education.

1. Responsibilities

- a) Richard Hale School is responsible for setting eligibility criteria for students at the institution.
- b) Richard Hale School will set conditions for receiving the bursary.
- c) Arrangements for applying for bursaries will be straightforward and of a confidential manner.
- d) Each student who applies for the bursary will be assessed by Richard Hale School and evidence may be obtained to support each application.
- e) The institution will claim vulnerable bursaries from the Student Bursary Support Service for each eligible student.
- f) The school's preference is to make bursary payments in-kind rather than to give money directly. This could be by buying items for students such as books, equipment, revision and field courses. We use the bursary fund to provide students with support to fund transport to and from school, and to attend interviews and university open days.
- g) Students will be informed via email whether their application has been successful.
- h) Records will be kept by Richard Hale School of all assessments and payments in line with our data protection policy, privacy notices and record retention schedule.

2. Eligibility

- a) Students who are aged 16 or over and under 19 years old on 31 August before the academic year in question will qualify for bursaries for that academic year.
- b) Bursary payments will be paid in-kind wherever possible, or via electronic payments made directly into the named student's bank account.
- c) Where a student turns 19 during their programme of study, they will continue to receive the bursary up until the end of the academic year in which they turn 19, or until the end of the programme of study, whichever is sooner.
- d) Students aged 19 and over who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (ECHP) due to their high needs are eligible to receive a bursary from the 16-19 Bursary Fund.
- e) Students can apply more than once. Each application will be assessed, in some cases including a one-to-one interview, to determine if there are any exceptional circumstances to consider.
- f) If a student has applied for the bursary in Year 12, they will need to re-apply at the beginning of Year 13 should they continue to require support.

- g) Most students who receive a bursary will get a tailored award from the discretionary bursary. Students in need of more support can apply for a full bursary award.

3. Discretionary bursaries

- a) Richard Hale School will ensure that discretionary funding is allocated to the students who are most in need of financial support.
- b) Richard Hale School's eligibility criteria for receiving a discretionary bursary includes:
- Students who are completing a high-cost course in which specialist equipment and clothes are required
 - Students living in a low-income household and are in receipt of one or some of the following:
 - Free School Meals (now or was in Year 11)
 - Income Support/Universal Credit
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
 - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - Child Tax Credit
 - The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- c) Students who apply will be assessed individually. This assessment will be documented and evidence to support the claims will be obtained and retained for audit purposes.
- d) The assessment will be based on a student's financial needs.
- e) Students can receive discretionary bursaries in the form of in-kind payments, such as transport passes, free school meals and money for educational visits.
- f) Richard Hale School will manage the discretionary bursary to keep payments within budget.
- g) Students may also apply for an '**Exceptional Circumstances**' Bursary if they do not fit within the criteria in 3. b) above but have extenuating circumstances. This will be via the same application process as for the Discretionary Bursary.

4. Vulnerable Bursaries

- a) Richard Hale School's eligibility criteria for receiving a vulnerable bursary includes students who are:
- In care
 - Care leavers
 - Receiving income support or universal credit in their own right
 - Receiving employment support allowance and disability living allowance, or personal independence payments, in their own right.
- b) Students who are in one or more of these categories can apply for a vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200.
- c) Where a vulnerable student is on a course lasting 30 weeks or more and is participating full-time, they will be eligible to receive up to £1,200.
- d) Where a vulnerable student is on a part-time course, the institution can make a reduction based on an hourly or daily rate.
- e) Proof will be needed to evidence that a student is eligible for the bursary.
- f) Students do not have to live independently to their parents/carers to be eligible for a vulnerable bursary.
- g) Richard Hale School is responsible for assessing whether students are eligible to receive a vulnerable bursary.

5. Conditions of receiving bursary funding

- a) Receipt of a vulnerable or discretionary bursary will be conditional on the student meeting the agreed standards set by Richard Hale School.
- b) The conditions of payment will be clear and accessible to students, as well as being thoroughly explained as part of the induction process.
 - Evidence that the student has seen and agreed to the conditions will be kept for audit, such as an agreement signed by the student.
- c) Students in receipt of bursaries must have 95 per cent attendance at school and timetabled lessons, unless the absence is authorised.
- d) Students in receipt of bursaries will be expected to abide by the Behaviour Policy and the 6th Form Code of Conduct of Richard Hale School.
- e) Students in receipt of bursaries are required to confirm their agreement to these conditions in the application form and that they have submitted correct information and evidence.
- f) Where there are concerns regarding a student's attendance or behaviour, we will discuss the issue with the student and consider individual exceptional circumstances before withholding any payments.
- g) Students may be required to return equipment purchased with the Bursary Fund such as books and equipment at the end of their studies so they can be used by another student.

6. Student declarations

- a) Students in receipt of bursaries are required to confirm their agreement to these conditions in the application form and that they have submitted correct information and evidence.
- b) Giving false or incomplete information which results in an overpayment will mean that future payments will be stopped, and repayment can be sought by Richard Hale School for anything paid so far.
 - The matter may also be referred to the police, with the possibility of the student and/or their parent/carer facing prosecution.

7. Exclusions

- a) The bursary fund will not be used by Richard Hale School for any reasons which would give them a competitive advantage over other institutions, such as:
 - Enrolment or administration fees imposed by the institution
 - Fees for access to facilities in the institution
 - Block subsidy of the Dining Hall
 - Block subsidy of transport
 - Block provision of equipment, materials or books
 - Paying bonus payments to reward attendance or achievement.
- b) Block payments to students for attendance, irrespective of their actual financial need, will not be paid.
- c) The bursary fund will only be used for supporting students who have a genuine financial difficulty which might prevent them from continuing in education, rather than acting as an incentive for attendance.

8. Applications

- a) Applications for the Bursary are managed in Richard Hale School by using the Applicaa system. Applicaa is GDPR compliant. Students should make their application by following this link [APPLICATION FORM](#). All applications are treated with the utmost confidentiality.

9. Complaints and appeals

- a) All complaints and appeals must be made in writing.
- b) If the complaint or appeal concerns operational processes or customer service for a vulnerable bursary funding claim, the Director of Business will deal with the case.
- c) If the complaint or appeal concerns the 16 to 19 Bursaries Fund Policy, it must be referred to the ESFA immediately.
- d) Richard Hale School will act as a first point of contact for students who have complaints and will support students as much as possible throughout the complaints procedure.
- e) Complaints made regarding the institution and Richard Hale School's provision of support will be dealt with in accordance with the procedure set out in the Complaints Policy.

10. Monitoring and review

- a) This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is in accordance with the latest guidance published by the DfE.
- b) The institution will ensure that this policy is implemented correctly and appropriately at all times.

References

DfE 16-19 Bursary Fund guide: 2025 to 2026:

<https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/41185/1/16%20to%2019%20Bursary%20Fund%20guide%202025%20to%202026%20-%20GOV.UK.pdf>