



Archbishop Holgate's School

A Church of England Academy Founded 1546

Headteacher: Mr A Daly BA NPQH Patron: His Grace the Archbishop of York

16 – 19 Discretionary Fund Policy Statement

1. Purpose

The 16-19 Discretionary Fund exists to help students continue with and complete their course where they would otherwise be prohibited from doing so on financial grounds. This funding replaces both the Education Maintenance Allowance and the Discretionary Learner Support Funding for September 2011 onward.

The Discretionary is intended to help with the hardship needs of individual students. It's intent is to "enable" a learner to continue with his or her education and should not be viewed as an incentive to attract young people into learning. Generally, awards from the Discretionary will be used towards essential course related costs such as books, equipment, travel, field trips, visits and other costs associated with living and learning.

2. Statement of Principles

Archbishop Holgate's Sixth Form will seek to ensure that the funds available are:

- Distributed fairly through a process which is transparent and easily understood. Information about the process for application and consideration is available from the Student Support Officer in the Sixth Form.
- Assessed and allocated to each individual's need, taking into account the financial circumstances of the applicant and the intended use of the award
- Used to widen access to, and participation in, sixth form education.

16-19 Discretionary Funding and the guidance concerning the administrative arrangements, priority groups for support and monitoring arrangements is issued by the Education Funding Agency (EFA). This gives a broad overview of the Fund on the whole and instructs schools on the appropriate use of the funding.

Please note: there is a limited amount of funding which means that it may not be possible to support



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Archbishop Holgate's School, Hull Road, York, YO10 5ZA

Telephone 01904 411341 email reception@archbishopholgates.org website www.archbishopholgates.org

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Registered Office: Archbishop Holgate's School, A Church of England Academy, Hull Road, York YO10 5ZA

3. Eligibility

The 16-19 Discretionary Funds has two elements:

Vulnerable Students (First Priority Group)

The following students will be eligible to receive a Discretionary of £1,200 per year (dependant on government funding), if agreed standards of behaviour and attendance are met:

- in care—being a looked after children in the care of the Local Authority or foster parents
- care leavers
- those young people who receive Income Support **or** Universal Credit
- in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) **or** in receipt of ESA and a Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

NB. Students cannot receive both the guaranteed Discretionary and transitional EMA funding.

Discretionary for Other Young People

Students apart from those in the First Priority Group may also apply for assistance from the Discretionary Fund. These awards will be targeted towards young people facing financial barriers to participation in sixth form studies. Priority will be given to those young people from the families with the lowest household income as outlined below. Again agreed standards of behaviour and attendance should be met.

Second Priority Group—Those eligible for Free School Meals or with a household income of under £16,149

Third Priority Group— Those with a household income of between £16,149 and £35,000.

We must stress that there is a limited amount of funding which means that it may not be possible to support every application and priority will be given to those students from the families with the lowest household income and/or highest demonstrated need.

4. Application Process:

Step 1: To receive a Discretionary, students will need to provide appropriate evidence of their eligibility. Completed financial assessment forms should be returned to the Sixth Form as early as possible for confirmation of eligibility.

Only once confirmation of financial eligibility is received-

Step 2: Application forms for the Discretionary Fund should be completed and returned to the Sixth Form

Step 3: Applicants will be advised as to the outcome of their applications

- Students in the first priority group will receive direct payments
- Other successful applicants will either have the books, equipment or other costs provided by the school or direct payment will be made to their bank account (on a termly basis)
- Unsuccessful applicants will have the right of appeal

5. Statement of Practice

Attendance and behaviour requirements generally align with the attendance and behaviour standards expected of all students who are part of Archbishop Holgate's Sixth Form and can be found in the Student Agreement and Attendance Policy. Where the learner does not meet the agreed attendance or behaviour standards, which will be monitored on a regular basis, the school will make every effort to advise the learner and help resolve any issues but retains the right to rescind or suspend Discretionary payment(s).

Attendance—Minimum attendance of 90%

Punctuality—Not late of any more than two occasions during any single week

Academic Performance—Meeting minimum target grades

Discipline—No behaviour and disciplinary record

NB. Discretionary will cease if the recipient leaves Sixth Form

6. Awards Process—Further information

Discretionary awards are made for specified course related costs and/or other costs viewed as presenting a barrier to the individual learner's participation in education. The amount of each award will be assessed and disbursed on an individual, case by case basis as detailed in the individual's application form. In most cases students will be expected to make a contribution towards their course-related costs.

The School may offer bursaries in the form of non-cash "in kind" payments where appropriate, such as travel vouchers or meal vouchers, attendance on course related school trips etc. Any equipment purchased by the school for use by an individual learner remains the property of the school and must be returned upon completion of or withdrawal from the course.

The school may also offer an award in the form of a short-term loan to help a learner bridge a temporary financial hardship where this is deemed appropriate and agreed by the learner. In this case, the school will draw up an agreement with the learner clearly stating the use of and the conditions surrounding the reimbursement arrangements which the learner should sign indicating he or she understands the conditions of the loan. The learner should be able to provide evidence that the award has been used as intended.

7. Decision Making

The criteria identified in this policy document are guidelines to the decision making process. Every effort is made by the Sixth Form to consider each application on its own merits. In extenuating circumstances the Sixth Form reserves the right to make awards to individual students who do not necessarily meet the listed criteria.

The 16-19 Discretionary Fund cannot be used to compensate for a student's failure to apply for other sources of support that may be available to them.

The funding available is limited and with the exception of the guaranteed Discretionary awards will not be guaranteed. Students who apply after the budget has been allocated may not be made an award. If a student eligible for a guaranteed Discretionary applied after all the funds have been allocated the Sixth Form can apply to EFA for additional funding; additional funding is not however guaranteed to be made available.

8. Appeals Process

Should learners disagree with the outcome of either their application for a Discretionary award or, where a payment has been withheld due to attendance/behaviour, they should follow the School's complaints procedure.

Full details of the School's complaints (which follows the stages outlined below) procedure can be made available as necessary.

Stage 1 – Informal

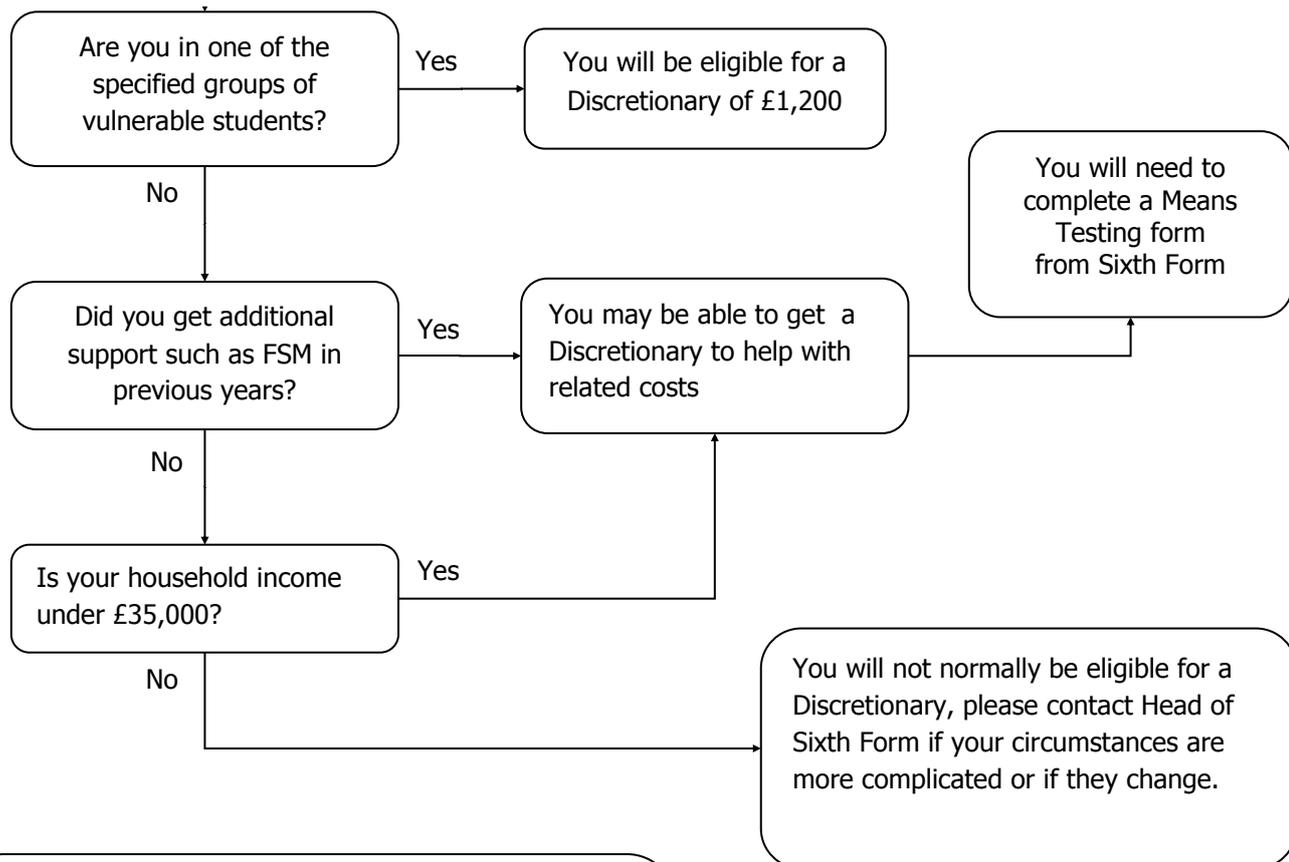
Stage 2: Referral to the Head Teacher for investigation

Stage 3: Review by the Governing Body

9. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, taking into account the views of the school, young people and their parents and guidance from the Department for Education and the Young People's Learning Agency.

10. Quick Guide to Eligibility



Vulnerable groups are young people who are

- in care or
- care leavers or
- on income support or
- on employment & support allowance and disability

Please speak to the Sixth Form Team if you have any concerns.