

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning and Culture
2.	Date:	8th November, 2011
3.	Title:	16-19 Bursary Fund, RMBC policy for learners on ESF programmes
4.	Programme Area:	Lifelong Learning and Culture

5. **Summary:**

This paper sets out the implications on the Local Authority and post-16 providers in allocating and managing the 16-19 Bursary Fund (Bursary). RMBC is required to publish a Policy Statement on allocation of the Bursary for post 16 ESF learners. This policy will only cover Vulnerable Groups as ESF funding covers all course related costs

6. **Recommendations:**

Children and Young People's Services Strategic Director recommends that the Cabinet Member approves this policy.

7. Proposals and Details:

- Cabinet Member to endorse RMBC's policy covering ESF learners.
- RMBC to submit a business case to YPLA for additional funding by 31/10

8. Finance:

- To note that all 8 School Sixth Forms have received their allocations and are developing their own individual policies based upon a model template designed by Rotherham partners.
- To note the decision by Special Schools to take full responsibility for administering the Bursary for their learners

9. Risks and Uncertainties:

- YPLA has given assurance that all learners entitled to the Vulnerable Groups Bursary will be funded based on the Management Information collected and the receipt of a business case letter to request the necessary amount.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:

- 5% admin equates to £600 per year to develop policy, manage, administer, allocate and deal with appeals.
- As a result this work will be absorbed into the business of Raising Participation Team and Education Development and Resources given the existing responsibility for managing and delivering ESF

11. Background Papers and Consultation:

The 16-19 Bursary Fund (Bursary) exists to help students to continue in education where they would otherwise be prohibited from doing so on financial grounds. This funding replaces both the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and the Discretionary Learner Support Fund (DLSF) and is available to young people in full or part time education from August 2011, subject to meeting eligibility criteria, some of which are set by providers. Bursary awards are to be used towards essential course related expenses and other costs associated with living and learning. Nationally, the Bursary is substantially less than the funding that was available for EMA (£180m compared to £550m per annum), which may impact on participation and NEET. Post-16 providers are indicating that their Bursary allocations are unlikely to support all the learners they would wish to support.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund has two elements:

- Vulnerable Groups Bursary - £1200 per year for young people in care, care leavers, young people in receipt of income support and disabled

young people in receipt of both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance.

- Discretionary Bursary – Distribution of this remaining funding is at the discretion of individual providers and targeted towards young people facing the greatest financial barriers to participation and is **subject to affordability**.
 - a) Each institution retains 5% of the Bursary allocation for administration. The possibility of pooling this resource was discussed in July. There was little appetite amongst providers for a common Bursary policy across Rotherham. However, providers have worked with RMBC to develop a model policy to support the development of their own statements and processes.
 - b) As autonomous organisations, academies, colleges and Work Based Learning providers have received Bursary funding direct from the YPLA and are responsible for developing their own policies and the management and allocation to learners.
 - c) Maintained School Sixth Forms (SSF's) have received Bursary funding from the YPLA via RMBC (LA passports funding to Maintained SSFs, as per the Conditions of Funding contract). SSFs are responsible for developing their own policies and the management and allocation to learners.
 - d) RMBC receives £12,920 Bursary funding intended for learners in post-16 Special Schools and post 16 learners on ESF funded programmes, where the provider does not hold a contract with the YPLA. (£5700 for ESF and £7220 between the 3 Special Schools).
 - i. Special Schools have opted for the LA to passport Bursary funding to them. They are therefore required to take on management responsibility and develop their own policies. All 3 Special Schools are adapting the model policy.
 - ii. RMBC is required to publish a Policy Statement on allocation of the Bursary for post 16 ESF learners. This policy will only cover Vulnerable Groups as ESF funding covers all course related costs.
 - e) £12,920 is insufficient to meet demand for Bursaries in Special Schools and ESF learners; a majority of learners are likely to qualify for the Vulnerable Groups Bursary. The YPLA has reassured LAs that they will not be in any financial risk as funding will be made available from YPLA contingency funds to cover costs of Bursary to learners in the vulnerable groups. The first request for data has been announced (Number of Guaranteed Bursaries approved, as of 30th Sept to be submitted by 31st Oct). This will give the first indication of the true shortfall in allocations to RMBC and the SSs.

f) The Student Support section within CYPS no longer exists. There were early discussions about where assessing and managing this work sits in RMBC. As there is such a close physical and financial link between Raising Participation team and EDR for ESF learners, it has been agreed to manage Bursary between the RP and EDR teams.

12. Contact Name:

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