

# 16 to 19 Bursary Fund Policy

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<b>Related Regulations</b>	<a href="#">16 to 19 Bursary Fund: Overview - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> <a href="#">ESFA funding regulations for post 16 provision</a>
<b>Annexes and Supplementary Info</b>	
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## Bursary Fund Policy

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### 1. Aims and scope

The 16 to 19 bursary fund provides financial support to help students overcome the specific financial barriers to participation they face so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries and this policy refers to both:

- Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups (known as Vulnerable Bursary)
- Discretionary bursaries

This policy aims to:

- Set out clear and transparent processes for the use and allocation of 16 to 19 bursary funds
- Make sure that bursary funds are administered appropriately and fairly, with due regard to the Equality Act 2010
- Make clear to parents/carers and students the type of support that is available and how to apply for it
- Make clear to parents/carers and students the attendance and behaviour conditions for receiving the funds

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## 2. Guidance

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on the [16 to 19 bursary fund for the 2025 to 2026 academic year](#).

## 3. Definitions

- 'In care' is defined as: children looked after by a local authority on a voluntary basis ([section 20](#) of the Children Act 1989) or under a care order ([section 31](#) of the Children Act 1989)
- 'Looked after child' is defined as: a child in the care of a local authority or who is provided with accommodation by the authority in the exercise of any functions for more than 24 hours ([section 22](#) of the Children Act 1989)
- 'Care leaver' is defined as:
  - A young person aged 16 or 17 who was previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16, or
  - A young person aged 18 or above who was looked after prior to becoming 18 for a period of 13 weeks consecutively (or periods amounting to 13 weeks), which began after the age of 14 and ended after the age of 16

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

### 4.1 The Proprietor

The Proprietor has overall responsibility for

- Approving this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- Ensuring compliance with relevant requirements

### 4.2 The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Making sure that staff are familiar with this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy
- Making sure the policy is being applied consistently
- Setting eligibility criteria for bursary funding and making sure these comply with the Equality Act 2010
- Promoting awareness of the 16 to 19 bursary fund to prospective applicants and their parents/carers

### 4.3 Bursary Panel

The Bursary Panel is responsible for reviewing applications and supporting evidence in accordance with this policy

The panel consists of:

- The Head Teacher
- The Director of Education

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#### 4.4 Staff

Our staff are responsible for implementing this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy consistently.

#### 4.5 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are also expected to notify staff or the headteacher of:

- Any concerns or queries regarding this 16 to 19 bursary fund policy
- Any change in circumstances that might affect eligibility for bursary funding

#### 4.6 Students

Pupils are responsible for meeting the conditions attached to the receipt of any support from the bursary funding.

### 5. How we use the bursary fund

Financial support is available to eligible students from the 16 to 19 bursary fund. See sections 6 and 7 for details of the eligibility criteria.

The fund is intended to support students aged 16 to 19 in overcoming specific financial barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- Bursaries for defined vulnerable groups; and
- Discretionary bursaries

The fund can be used by to provide students with support to fund:

- Transport to and from school/college
- Books to support courses
- Equipment required to support courses
- Trips that are essential to courses
- Specialist clothing required for participation in a course
- The cost of attending University interviews/Open Days

### 6. Eligibility criteria for the 16 to 19 bursaries

**Please note:** the following eligibility criteria will be assessed **in addition** to the individual student's actual financial needs. This means:

- No student will automatically be awarded an amount of funding without an assessment of the level of actual financial need they have
- Funding provided to each eligible student is based on their actual participation needs (supported by evidence) and not a flat or fixed-rate payment that does not reflect the actual costs they face

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## 6.1 Age

To be eligible for either bursary in the 2025 to 2026 academic year, students must be at least 16 years old but under 19 years old on 31 August 2025.

Students aged 19 or over are eligible only for a discretionary bursary (see section 6.6 below) if they:

- Are continuing on a study programme or course that they began when they were aged 16 to 18 years old (19+ continuers)
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for defined vulnerable groups.

## 6.2 Eligible education provision

Students must be participating in provision that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (e.g. Ofsted). The provision must also fall into 1 of these groups:

- Be funded directly by the DfE, or by the DfE via a local authority
- Be otherwise publicly funded and lead to a qualification (up to and including level 3) that is accredited by Ofqual or is on the DfE's [list of qualifications](#)
- Non-employed students aged 16 to 19 who are participating in a Prince's Trust Team Programme are also eligible to receive a bursary in the same way as any other student participating in an eligible, publicly funded course.

Students are not eligible if:

- They are on an apprenticeship programme
- They are participating in any waged training

Students who are studying via distance learning are not likely to require financial help from the bursary fund. If they do require financial help, we will provide support in kind, such as a travel pass to attend exams. Details of this shall be decided on a case-by-case basis.

## 6.3 Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in the [DfE funding rules for 16 to 19 provision](#).

## 6.4 Asylum seekers

Accompanied asylum seekers under 18 with an adult relative or partner, and asylum seekers aged 18 and above are entitled to education but are not entitled to public funds. If necessary, they can apply to the Home Office for suitable housing and cash for essentials.

We will provide in-kind support such as books, equipment and a travel pass to asylum seekers who have not had asylum refused.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are:

- The responsibility of the local authority
- To be treated as 'looked after' children
- Eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups, where they have a financial need

When these students reach 18 years old, we will consider their immigration status. They will still be eligible for a bursary as a student from a defined vulnerable group if the asylum claim is in their favour and will be treated as a 'care leaver' until they reach the upper age limit.

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## 7. Bursaries for young people in defined vulnerable groups

Students with a financial need, who meet 1 of the following 4 criteria below, in addition to the criteria outlined in sections 6.1 to 6.4 above, can apply for a bursary for vulnerable groups. The defined vulnerable groups are students who are:

- In care (N.B. those who are privately fostered are not classed as looked after)
- Care leavers
- Receiving Income Support (IS) or Universal Credit (UC) because they are financially supporting themselves, or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them, such as a child or partner
- Receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments (PIPs) in their own right, as well as Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right

UC has replaced IS, as well as other benefits above, for current and future young people aged 16 to 18. However, students aged 19 to 25 and funded from the 16 to 19 budget (such as students with an EHC plan) may still receive the legacy benefits listed above.

Students will be funded to reflect the amount of support they need to participate based on an assessment of the actual participation needs and costs they have.

Students who meet the criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups are not automatically entitled to a bursary.

Students will not receive the bursary if they do not have any actual financial need (for example, because their financial needs are met from other sources and/or because they have no relevant costs). Should we refuse the application on this basis, we will discuss this with the student and their support worker/parent/carer where applicable.

Where a bursary is provided, the funds will generally be up to £1,200 per year for study programmes lasting 30 weeks or more. When calculating the amount, cases will be looked at individually and the outcome based on a particular student's needs. Students will only receive the amount they actually need to participate and will not automatically receive £1,200 if they do not need the full amount.

We can use our discretion, on a case-by-case basis, to provide more than £1,200 per year if it is necessary, in all the circumstances, for the student to remain in education. Any such additional payment will be paid either from the school's discretionary bursary allocation or the school's own funds.

If a student's study programme lasts for less than 30 weeks, this will be considered in the assessment for the bursary amount provided as they may not request as much financial support as those on longer programmes. We will also consider the number of hours involved in a student's study programme when deciding the correct bursary amount to ensure it is appropriate.

We will review the student's eligibility position each academic year. Students will only continue to receive a bursary for vulnerable groups if they continue to satisfy the criteria.

## 8. Application and payment process

### 8.1 Applications

Applications should be submitted via completion of the attached form, sent via email or hardcopy to the school's Head Teacher.

Applications should ideally be submitted by **30<sup>th</sup> September 2025** to allow enough time for our school to assess the overall level of demand. This date will be clearly stated on the application form.

However, we acknowledge that students' circumstances may change and therefore the application process will remain open for the whole school year.

Applicants will be notified in writing (either via email or via letter) whether their application has been successful, together with the amount of funding awarded. If a student wishes to appeal the outcome of their application for a bursary, they must follow the school's complaints procedure.

Any enquiries about the application process should be directed to the school's headteacher.

## 8.2 Evidence

All applications for 16 to 19 bursaries must be supported by appropriate evidence, which we will verify. Examples of acceptable evidence we may request are:

- A copy of the UC or IS award notice from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and/or evidence of receipt of DLA or PIP, in the student's name
- Documents such as a tenancy agreement in the student's name, a child benefit receipt, birth certificate or utility bills
- Written confirmation of the student's current or previous looked-after status from the relevant local authority

## 8.3 Payment process

Payments are made using the following process:

1. The school notifies the Local Authority that the student has met the eligibility criteria and confirms the amount to be awarded;
2. The Local Authority releases the funding to the Central Office Finance Team
3. The Central Office Finance Team releases the funding to the student via BACS transfer or *made-in-kind payments* (eg Travel Passes, textbooks, meal vouchers etc)

Cash payments will not be made in any circumstances.

Please note that the school cannot provide clear timescales for payments released by Local Authorities.

## 8.4 Conditions for the receipt of bursary payments

Payments of the bursary are conditional on students meeting the following conditions in relation to their standards of attendance and behaviour:

- Attendance above 90% [subject to exceptional circumstances]
- Maintenance of expected behavioural standards
- Provision of receipts, invoices for expenditure and purchases [to be submitted to the Headteacher]

All students are required to sign a declaration confirming that they agree to these conditions.

Students who fail to meet these conditions may have their payment withheld, but we will always take students' individual circumstances into consideration. This includes considering the impact on attendance that might be caused by illness, caring responsibilities or other exceptional circumstances.

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If students have received in-kind support such as equipment or travel cards, they will be asked to return these if they fail to meet the conditions.

We will stop payments where students have decided to withdraw from a study programme.

We reserve the right to take back money from students where it is not spent for the reasons it was awarded.

We will consider the impact of such an action on the individual student before taking a final decision to do so, and any decision will be confirmed to the student in writing.

## 9. Change in circumstances

If there are changes in circumstances that may affect eligibility for a bursary, applicants and/or parents/carers must notify the school without delay.

## 10. Record keeping and audit

The school will maintain comprehensive and accurate records relating to the 16 to 19 bursary fund. These records will be kept securely and be readily available for audit purposes. Records will include, but are not limited to:

- Copies of application forms and supporting evidence
- Proof that students meet eligibility criteria
- Records of 'zero bursary' students
- Details of assessment decisions and rationale for awards
- Records of all payments made to students, including dates, value and purpose
- Copies of documents signed by students to give formal agreement to the conditions of payment
- Evidence of student attendance and progress monitoring

Records will be retained for 6 academic years after the end of the academic year in which the student completed their programme.

## 12. Unspent funds

Funding for bursary funding cannot be carried forward by the school for more than 1 year. Unspent funding must be reported to the DfE by the school using the [customer help centre](#), specifying the amount of funding and the year(s) it relates to, no later than 31 March each year. The DfE will recover all unspent funds.

## 13. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Director of Education.

## **14. Complaints or Appeals**

Where any student or parent is unhappy with how we have managed their application for bursary funding or the support that has been provided, they are free to make a complaint or appeal as per the school's Complaints & Representations Policy.

## Appendix 1

### 16-19 Bursary Fund Application – 2023/2024 Academic Year

Please complete this form if you are a student applying for 16-19 bursary. The information will be used to assess which bursary, if any, you are eligible for – either a bursary for defined vulnerable groups or a discretionary bursary.

You and your parent/carer will be required to sign a declaration to indicate that the information given in the form is both current and correct.

ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED WILL BE TREATED IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE

You may be eligible for a 16-19 bursary if you are undertaking a full-time programme of study in the academic year 2025/26 and were under 19 years old on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024.

If you are over the age of 19, you may be eligible for a discretionary bursary if you are completing a study programme you began when aged between 16-18, or if you have an EHCP.

#### Section 1 – Personal Information

First Name:		Surname:		Form:	
Date of Birth:		Age on 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2025:		Years	Months
Address: Inc postcode					
Home phone number:		Mobile Number			
Email Address:					

#### SECTION 2 – Your Courses

Please list the courses you are enrolled on.

1		2	
3		4	
5		6	

### SECTION 3 - Your Household

	Parent/Carer 1	Parent/Carer 2
Surname:		
First name:		
Relationship to student:		
Home address		
Mobile Phone Number		
E-mail address		

### SECTION 4 – Bursaries for Vulnerable Groups

Please complete this section only if you think you may be eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups of up to £1,200

If you satisfy one or more of the below criteria you may be eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups. Please note, even if you meet the criteria, you are not automatically entitled to a bursary. Applications are considered on a case by case basis and a full assessment of your financial needs will be carried out first. You will not receive the bursary if you have no actual financial needs (because they are met from via alternative means and/or you have no relevant costs), or you may be offered a reduced allowance.

Please tick all that apply:

I am a student in care	
I am a student who is a care leaver	
I am a student who receives <b>either</b> Income Support (IS) or Universal Credit (UC)	
I am a student who receives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability Living Allowance (DLA) <b>or</b> Personal Independence Payments (PIP); and <b>either</b></li> <li>• Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or UC</li> </ul>	

### SECTION 5 – Discretionary Bursaries

You **may** be eligible for a discretionary bursary if you satisfy one or more of the criteria below.

Please tick all that apply:

I am a student who lives in a household with a total income of less than £33,000 per annum	
I am a student who lives in a single parent household or have one or more dependent siblings living in my household	
I am a student who is a young carer or parent (or have other additional responsibilities)	
I travel more than 8 miles to school	

## SECTION 6 – Proof of income

*This section must be completed by you, the student, if you live independently. However, if you are dependent on your parent(s)/carer(s), they must complete this section of your application*

In order that your application for a 16-19 bursary can be fully assessed, evidence of your circumstances is required. Information about what to submit in support of your application can be found in the table below. Please place a tick in the 'Copy Attached' column to indicate what information you have provided.

What is your annual gross household income?		£
Source of income	Supporting Evidence Required	Copy Attached
Annual Salary	P60 for 2024/2025 or payslip for the month of March 2025 or payslip for the last week of March 2025 or Working Tax Credit Award Notice marked 2024/2025	
Income Support or Universal Credit	Entitlement /Award Letter – dated within the last 3 months	
Employment and Support Allowance	Entitlement /Award Letter – dated within the last 3 months	
Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments	Entitlement /Award Letter – dated within the last 3 months	
Job Seekers Allowance	Entitlement /Award Letter – dated within the last 3 months	
Support under part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999	Entitlement /Award Letter – dated within the last 3 months	
Guarantee element of State Pension Credit	Entitlement /Award Letter – dated within the last 3 months	
Child Tax Credit	Entitlement /Award Letter – dated within the last 3 months	
Working Tax Credit Run-On	Entitlement /Award Letter – dated within the last 3 months	
Any other benefit	Entitlement /Award Letter – dated within the last 3 months	
Grants or Bursaries	Relevant paperwork detailing entitlement and amount paid	
Any other income	Relevant paperwork	

## SECTION 7 – Declaration

Please read the declaration below carefully before signing:

1. I/We declare that the statements made on this form are true and to the best of my/our knowledge and belief are correct in every respect. I/We undertake to supply any additional information that may be required to support this application. I/We understand that if I/We refuse to provide information relevant to this claim the application will not be accepted. I/We also undertake to tell the school of any change in circumstances in writing. I/We agree to pay the school in full and immediately any sums advanced if the information I/We have given is shown to be false or deliberately misleading.

2. I/We am/are aware that the funding covers only this school year and that I/We must re-apply next year. I/We am/are aware there is no guarantee that funding will be received again in future years, even if it is received in the current year.

Signed: (Student)		Date:	
Signed: (Parent/Guardian 1 named above)		Date:	
Signed: (Parent/Guardian 2 named above)		Date:	

**Please submit this form to the Head Teacher.** All payments are dependent upon the agreed terms regarding attendance, punctuality and compliance with all general school rules and the maintenance of a standard of academic work which is in line with the targets set by the school.

**For School use only:**

Date Received:

Bursary Approved: Yes or No

Guaranteed Award or Discretionary Award

Authorised By:

Date:

Amount of Award:

Date Letter/bank details for issued:

Additional Notes