

16-19 Bursary Policy 2024/25

Background

The DFE operates a bursary fund for those studying at publicly funded schools or colleges in England aged 16-19. Funds from this are allocated to schools, academies, and further education (FE) colleges, sixth-form colleges, training providers, specialist independent providers and local authorities. The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

The bursary fund is made up of two parts - a bursary of up to £1,200 a year for the most vulnerable students in the sixth form and a discretionary fund. The school sets its own eligibility criteria for the discretionary bursaries and the terms and conditions under which they are awarded.

Funding

The allocation has been confirmed based on projections sent to the Education Funding Agency last academic year.

Administration

- School will retain 30% of the allocation for 'in-year applications'.
- The monies allocated to the 16-19 Bursary cost centre are ring-fenced and will only be spent on bursaries.
- All applications and awards are subject to available funds.

1. Eligibility

To be eligible to apply, a student must be aged at least 16 and under 19 on 31st August in the academic year they start their course. Where a young person turns 19 during their year of study they can continue to be supported until the end of the academic year or end of the course (whichever is sooner).

The fund has three elements:

- 1) Up to **£1,200 bursary** available to our most vulnerable students, where there are fixed eligibility criteria. These students are 'Automatically Eligible' if they fall into one of the following categories:
 - in care (this includes Asylum Seekers)
 - care leavers
 - receiving Income Support, or Universal Credit 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
 - young people in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and either Employment Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit in their own name;
 - young people in receipt of Personal Independence Payment and either ESA or Universal Credit in their own name.

Eligibility under this category will be verified using the following documents:

- written confirmation of the young person's current or previous looked-after status from the local authority which looks after them or provides their leaving care services;
- a letter setting out the benefit to which the young person is entitled.

- 2) A **Discretionary Bursary** for which students are deemed 'Eligible to Apply' if they are in receipt of Free School Meals or the combined **earned** household income is **less than £16,190**.

Students eligible to apply for the Discretionary Bursary will be EITHER:

Eligible for AND IN RECEIPT OF Free School Meals (based upon the level of parental income as outlined on DirectGov website);

OR will be

Students with a **combined earned household income not exceeding £16,190**.

- 3) A **Hardship Bursary** for which students are deemed 'Eligible to Apply' if there are unique family circumstances. Each application will be assessed on a case by case basis.

In most cases, the school will purchase goods and services or credit a gateway account on behalf of the student rather than paying the student directly, however, all students must have their own bank account to receive a reimbursement of an approved purchase and all payments made to the student will be made via BACS.

2. The Application Process

Students who wish to apply should collect an application form from either **the 6th Form Student Progress Coordinator or download and complete the form enclosed in this policy**. This form, along with appropriate documentation as proof of eligibility, must be submitted to Student Services. For the discretionary bursary, students/parents must also have submitted an application to the Local Authority and been awarded Free School Meals before they submit their application **or** be able to prove their family income (via copies of P60, benefit/award documentation, etc.). Free School Meal eligibility will be verified with the Local Authority. Students may submit an application **at any point** during the academic year as their financial/home situation dictates but payments cannot be back-dated.

3. What the bursary provides

Travel

Greater Manchester resident students aged 16-18 could be eligible for free travel using GM Our Pass.

Our Pass is a UK first, a simple scheme that ensures all eligible 16-18 year olds in Greater Manchester have the chance to become an Our Pass member – and gain access to two things: free bus travel, and exclusive experiences. For a one-off £10 administration fee, Our Pass provides free travel on most local buses across Greater Manchester. It also gives members half-price off peak one day and weekend travel cards on Metrolink. Students must apply for their own pass, once the receipt for the pass has been submitted to the finance office, the cost will be reimbursed.

However, if you use other types of public transport to travel to 6th Form or live outside of Greater Manchester, funds may be available to assist you with travel costs if your bursary application is successful. Please enquire for more details.

Chromebook

All students who are successful in a bursary application will have the opportunity to apply for the loan of a chrome book for use during their studies. These will be issued after October half term and students must sign an agreement confirming they will continue to adhere to the rules of the bursary and acceptance that failure to do so will result in the return of the Chromebook or repayment of the cost of the Chromebook. It may not be possible to loan all bursary students a Chromebook and applications will be assessed on an individual needs basis.

Essential Educational Trips

All students who are successful in a bursary application can apply to have the costs of essential education trips covered. This includes trips essential for the completion of a course and careers related trips such as university visits attended with Thornleigh 6th Form. Students must take the responsibility for completing the google form to cover the costs prior to the trip.

Educational Equipment

All students who are successful in a bursary application can apply to have the costs of any necessary equipment covered. This list includes items such as stationary, books or materials necessary for the completion of a course.

Enrichment Trips

All eligible bursary students can apply for financial support to participate in and attend non-essential enrichment trips. Payment of or towards these trips is not guaranteed and will be dependent on available funds.

Hardship Bursary

Hardship Bursary applications can be made at any point in the year if a particular need arises. Students can apply for any of the above and each application will be considered on a case by case basis and will be influenced by available funds. This would be applicable for students who do not meet the thresholds for the full bursary but may have a particular need. This application should be made as required, if a need arises, and does not need to be made at the start of the year.

Any bursary awarded will be subject to attendance reviews. Payment can stop at any time if a student fails to attend school or attendance is below a satisfactory level (at the Headteacher's discretion).

Applications last the duration of the academic year and students will need to resubmit an application each year to be awarded a bursary.

Students in receipt of bursary funding are required to make the school aware of any change in financial/home situation as they arise. Parents/students are required to sign to this effect in the application form and if upon review it is found that individuals have falsified documents, submitted inaccurate information or been claiming money fraudulently the school may take legal action including recovery of the money and referral to the police.

3. The Appeals Process

Students have the right to appeal a decision. Students, or their parent/guardian, will be required to put any appeal in writing within 21 days of receiving confirmation of an award or a rejection. The letter should set out the reasons for the appeal and be sent to the Head of Sixth Form. The appeals panel will consist of the Headteacher, Head of Sixth Form, Director of School Services and the Assistant Business Manager and their decision will be given within 14 days of receiving the written appeal.

4. Complaints Procedures

Should a student/parent wish to make a formal complaint regarding the 16-19 Bursary application and decision process they should follow the School Complaints Procedure which is available on the school website.

5. 16-19 Bursary Terms and Conditions

Students must:

- Attend timetabled lessons, sessions or activities (at least 95% attendance, unless there are exceptional circumstances).
- **Have no unauthorised absence.**
- Achieve positive Commitment to Learning grades (4 or 5).
- Conduct themselves in a professional manner within the school community.

Should a student not meet the conditions above, their Bursary will be revoked and the school may ask for the return of any items provided or repayment.

6. Data

The School is required to track data on each student who submits an application. This information will be audited by Education Funding Authority (EFA).

For audit purposes students applying for the discretionary bursary are required to identify why they require the bursary (e.g. laptop, fieldwork/visit, transport, meals, etc.). Any information regarding this (along with application forms) will be stored. The data will be disposed of securely after 7 years.

7. Other information

The EFA (Education Funding Agency) requires information from school about use of the 16-19 Bursary funding. For information, they want to know:

- How many vulnerable students were allocated the 16-19 £1200 bursary and how much did they actually receive?
- How many were in each of the following categories:
 - Young people in care;
 - Care leavers ;
 - Students claiming Income Support or Universal Credit;
 - Students in receipt of the other benefits mentioned above.
- How many applied for the 'Discretionary Bursary'?
- How many were awarded the 'Discretionary Bursary' and what was the allocation?
- How much did these students actually receive?
- How much was spent on Discretionary Bursaries in total?
- For what reasons was each bursary allocated:
 - Books/equipment
 - Additional Costs
 - Transport
 - Meals
 - Clothing necessary for the course
 - Materials necessary for the course

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- Course-related trips
 - Exam resit fees
 - UCAS/open day costs
 - Sports activities (where they directly relate to a course)
 - Professional membership fees
 - Other miscellaneous – specifying what
-
- The EFA will audit the 16-19 Bursary.
 - It is expected that if a student changes provider that the information regarding their Bursary Award is communicated to the new provider by TSC.
 - All Bursary payments will be used to support the student's education.

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How do I apply

Initially all applications must be completed using the Bursary Application Form enclosed with this policy.

If accepted as a bursary student all subsequent applications for funding should be made using the school google forms. These will be emailed to you upon acceptance and should be saved in a safe location.

Travel Applications – Once accepted as a bursary student, students should create their own Our Pass account and pay the £10 fee. Bring the receipt to the finance department for reimbursement. <https://ourpass.co.uk/>

Bursary Application Form

Section A: Personal Details

Name		Form	
Age on 31 st August 2024			
Address			
Post Code			
Telephone Number			
Mobile Number			
School Email Address			

Section B: Type of Bursary

I am applying for:	Tick as appropriate
£1200 Vulnerable Bursary (Go to Section C)	
16-19 Discretionary Bursary (Go to Section D)	

Section C: Personal Circumstances – VULNERABLE BURSARY ONLY

Please outline your personal circumstances below	Tick as appropriate
In Care	
Care Leavers (live Independently having left Local Authority Care)	
Income Support (IS) or Universal Credit (UC) because you are financially supporting yourself or financially supporting yourself and someone who is dependent on you and living with you such as a child or a partner	
Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payments in your own right as well as Employment Support Allowance ¹ (ESA) or Universal Credit in your own right	

Please note that to qualify for a vulnerable student payment, the young person does not have to live independently of their parents; they can claim ESA or UC in their own right. Parents should note that they will not be able to claim Child Benefit for them if the young person's claim for ESA succeeds.

You will need to provide a letter from DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) confirming which benefit you are entitled to. For students who are In Care or Care leavers, you will need to provide a letter from your Local Authority.

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Section D: Personal Circumstances – DISCRETIONARY BURSARY ONLY

Do you receive Free School Meals?		Tick as appropriate	
Yes			
No			
Are you/parents/carers in receipt of any of the following? (please tick as appropriate)			
Income Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child Tax Credit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pension Guarantee Credit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment and Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Working Tax Credit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Universal Credit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was your annual household earned income in the last tax year below £16,190?			Tick as appropriate
Yes (Please enclose proof eg Tax Credit Forms (TC602), Self-Employment / a P60 for each income)			
No			
How many persons in your household are age 18 and under?			
What subjects are you studying?			
How do you travel to college?			

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Section E: Declaration

- I/We declare that the information we have given in support of this application is correct and complete to the best of my/our knowledge and belief.
- I/We will inform you immediately of any change in circumstances at any time, which might affect my entitlement to support (for example if I leave college or am no longer eligible for the funding)
- I/We understand that this information will not be shared with third party organisations, except for audit purposes.
- I/We understand that poor attendance/(unauthorised absences), non-compliance with Thornleigh Sixth Form, receiving a Formal Warning may result in loss of financial support.
- I/We understand that awards made are subject to the college receiving sufficient funds from the government.
- I/We will comply with the learning policies of Thornleigh Sixth form

Section F: Signatures

Student: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Please print name: _____

Parent/Guardian/Responsible Adult: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Please print name: _____

Please return this form with the relevant documentary evidence to the Sixth Form. All applications will be acknowledged and decisions about the award made as quickly as possible. This application and all documents provided with it will be dealt with the strictest confidence

Office Use Only:

	Date	Signed
Date application received		
Documents provided:		
Final decision		
Email sent to student		