



Westcountry Schools Trust

Hele's School

16 – 19 Bursary Guidance Notes 2026-27

Are you eligible for the 16 – 19 Bursary?

Introduction

The bursary fund is intended to help students with the essential costs of participating in their study programme, so to help with the cost of essential books or equipment or with the cost of travelling to school or college, for example. The bursary fund is not intended to support costs not related to education (living costs), extra-curricular activities or provide learning support – services that institutions give to students – such as counselling, mentoring or extra tutoring.

There are two types of 16-19 Bursary; a **Vulnerable** Bursary, and a **Discretionary** Bursary. To be eligible to receive either of these Bursaries you must be aged over 16 and under 19 at 31 August 2026.

Should you qualify, you will need to apply by completing the Bursary Application Form and provide supporting evidence. Please read all the details below carefully.

(All applications will be treated confidentially. Photocopies of documents will be taken and the originals returned to you as quickly as possible.)

Vulnerable Bursary (V1)

Students in the defined vulnerable group are eligible for a bursary of up to £1,200 per year, and should be in one of the following: -

- young person in care, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children
 - young care leaver
 - 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 (PIP) in their own right as well as Employment **and** Support Allowance (ESA) or UC in their own right
- (If you are a parent you will also need to be living away from your own parents to qualify.)*

If you are applying for this level of support you will need to provide evidence in written form.

Suggested forms of evidence include:-

- A letter from the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) setting out the benefits to which you are entitled
- Written confirmation of your current or previous looked after status from the local authority that looks after you, or provides you with other leaving care services.

Discretionary Bursary (D1, D2 & D3)

Discretionary bursaries are aimed at students who would not be able to stay in education without financial help. There are three types of Discretionary Bursary.

D1 enables students to claim a larger sum for educational expenses than D2 and D3. The maximum award for D1 is £1,200 and for D2 is £900. However, the exact value of these bursaries will depend on the number of applications received each year.

You will qualify for the **D1** bursary if: -

- you are in receipt of Free School Meals, and/or
- you have a household income up to £27,275.

You will qualify for the **D2** bursary if: -

- you have a household income between £27,276 and £31,750.

To claim for the **D3** bursary there must be exceptional circumstances requiring a specific one-off payment - please speak to the Sixth Form Team if you think you may be eligible for this.

Students who are eligible for V1, D1 or D2 bursaries, and who have additional travel costs may be eligible for a higher value of bursary. Please make your Sixth Form Team aware of any travel cost you will incur.

Required evidence to support applications

All applications will need to be accompanied by evidence from you/your parents.

Vulnerable Bursary (V1):

- proof of being a Child in Care or a Care Leaver
- young person in receipt of Income Support or Universal Credit in your own name
- young person in receipt of **either** Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your own name **and** Employment Support Allowance or UC in your own name

Discretionary Bursary (D1 & D2)

- **current up to date** Universal Credit Notice (showing your total household income, as evidenced by your **three** most recent monthly UC Award statements.)
or
- **evidence of household benefits assessed by HMRC** (e.g. Universal Credit or Income Support)
Please ensure that the documentation shows the household income

Discretionary Bursary (D3)

- **current up to date** Universal Credit Notice (showing your total household income, as evidenced by your **three** most recent monthly UC Award statements.)
or
- **evidence of household benefits assessed by HMRC** (e.g. Universal Credit or Income Support)
Please ensure that the documentation shows the household income
or
- household wage slips covering the most recent **three month** period

Your applications should state the expenses/items you foresee needing financial support for. These may include:- transport costs to and from School; books or equipment for courses; meals whilst in School; trips, visits and activities as part of your course; university open days and interviews, or any other costs related to your studies.

Should other costs arise during the course of the year, these can still be claimed for providing they meet the criteria and you have not already received the maximum value of your approved Bursary.

The maximum claim for a single item is capped at £500. A claim for any single item above £500 would require a written request, to the Sixth Form Team for their consideration.

In order to receive financial support students must:

- meet School expectations in terms of conduct, progress in the programme of study and attendance
- maintain an attendance threshold as detailed below
- attend any examinations you are entered for
- have signed and returned **both** the **16-19 Bursary Application** form and the **16-19 Bursary Student Agreement**
- adhere to all elements of the Contract and Entitlement Criteria.

These aspects will be reviewed throughout the year, using an academic tracking system, Tutor and Teacher concerns, as well as attendance analysis.

The value of bursary payment may be reduced in line with the table below, should attendance levels drop as shown. Individual circumstances will be taken into account and discussed with you in advance.

Attendance level of 95% or over	100% bursary payment
Attendance level of 90-94%	75% bursary payment
Attendance level of 85-89%	50% bursary payment
Attendance level below 85%	No bursary payment

Making an application and by when.

Application Forms are available on the School website or from the Sixth Form office. These should be completed and returned along with all supporting evidence no later than **Friday, 25 September 2026**.

We are aware that personal circumstances may change during the year, and an application after this date may need to be made. Please be advised however, that late applications may mean reduced funds.

Should you need any further guidance, please feel free to contact a member of the Sixth Form Team.

Inaccurate or fraudulent applications.

By signing the application form, you agree that the information and evidence you provide in support of your application, is correct and complete to the best of your knowledge.

False information given may mean that payments will cease, and that any overpayments will be recovered. Fraudulent applications will be referred to the EFA.

When and how will I be able to access funding?

When your claim has been approved, depending on the nature of your application, you will either:

- receive monthly payments (October – June)
- payments will be made on your behalf or
- reimbursement will be made to you directly if you chose to pay up front for approved items.

Please see the Post 16 Bursary Application form for more information