



Hillside Specialist School & College

Providing exceptional education for all students

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16-19 Bursary Policy – Academic Year September 2025 – July 2026

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund is money the government has given to local authorities, schools, colleges and other education and training providers (education institutions) to support students who need financial help to stay in education.

Bursary Eligibility

To be eligible to receive a bursary you must be aged over 16 and under 19 on 31 August 2025. The 16-19 Bursary Fund is allocated annually and must be applied for each academic year.

There are 2 elements of support available to pupils.

Vulnerable Bursary

A lump sum, for the academic year, for young people in one of the following defined vulnerable groups:

- **in care**
- **a care leaver**
- 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)
- receiving **Disability Living Allowance** or **Personal Independence Payments** in their own right as well as **Employment and Support Allowance** or **Universal Credit** in their own right

All young people applying for the vulnerable bursary will need to have their own bank account by the end of the Autumn term.

Discretionary Bursary

This is an award given to young people based on their needs and circumstances. This bursary will be paid 'in kind' to further support families and to increase capacity for teaching and learning. Examples of how this may be used are purchasing of materials for specific courses (e.g. walking boots). Extended School Activities, functional activities that support the adult outcome of 'Good Health'.

The discretionary award will be available for young people currently in receipt of free school meals or identified via other means as a required need for financial support to access learning. This will be made to students of families in receipt of tax credits with a household income of less than £23,900.

Application Process and Evidence Requirements

All young people wishing to be considered for a bursary will need to complete an application form, which are available from school. Applications must be submitted to the school no later than **Wednesday 22nd October**. Applications received after this date may not be considered.

The school is responsible for verifying your eligibility for a bursary award, and therefore you are required to provide supporting evidence with your application form.

Vulnerable Bursary

- Evidence setting out the benefit(s) to which the young person is entitled.
- 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 service.

Discretionary Bursary

- Confirmation from the Local Authority that the young person is currently in receipt of free school meals.
- **Please provide evidence of any of the following: P60, receipt of benefit entitlement, Tax Credit Award Notification, Self Employed income notification. 3 most recent monthly award statements are required.**

It is a requirement to submit evidence to support your application.

Conditions

Any young person in receipt of a bursary award will be expected to maintain satisfactory attendance throughout the year. A minimum attendance of 95% is expected, with no unauthorised absences during the year. In addition, all learners are expected to behave appropriately at all times within the school and when representing the school externally whilst demonstrating a commitment to their course. If a learner receiving a bursary fund award does not adhere to these requirements, the school may discontinue future payments/awards.

The application form requires all applicants to agree to these conditions.

Decisions

Meeting the criteria for a bursary does not automatically mean funding will be given, or, limited funding may be given. Young people and parents/guardians should understand that the bursary fund is a limited resource within the school. Outcomes of the applications will be decided by the 16-19 Bursary Committee.

Payment Process

Receipt of both vulnerable bursaries and discretionary bursaries are conditional. The young person needs to meet the agreed standards relating to attendance and behaviour as detailed above. If a young person is in receipt of the vulnerable bursary, payments to young people who qualify under element 1 will be paid in 3 termly instalments.

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

Unspent Money

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.

Appeals Process

Any appeals or complaints will be considered in line with the school's existing complaints procedure.