Southam College
16 to 19 Bursary Policy
2026/27

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16-19 BURSARY POLICY

1. Introduction

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.

1.1. Students must meet the age and residency criteria which follow to be eligible for help from the bursary fund.

1.2. Age: A student must be over 16 on 1st September and under 19 on 31st August in the academic year in which they start their programme of study.

Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing on a study programme, they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers) or have an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Plan.

These 2 groups of aged 19+ students can receive a discretionary bursary while they continue to attend education (in the case of a 19+ continuer, this must be the same programme they started before they turned 19), as long as their eligibility continues, and their institution considers they need the support to continue their participation.

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

1.3. Residency:

Students must meet the residency criteria in ESFA funding regulations for post-16 provision. This document also specifies the evidence institutions must see and retain for audit to confirm eligibility for post-16 funding (and therefore meet the residency criteria for bursary fund eligibility).

2. There are two types of bursary:

2.1. **Bursary for defined vulnerable groups.** This bursary is available to:

- Young people in care.
- Care leavers.
- Those claiming 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.
- those claiming 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

  Defining in care and care leavers
- The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund defines 'in care' 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). Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 defines the term 'looked after child'.

- A 'care leaver' is defined as:
- a young person aged 16 and 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.

2.2. **Discretionary bursary**. This bursary is intended for other students most in need of financial support. The goal of the discretionary bursary is that it should enable students to complete their studies by providing assistance towards essential participation costs. The school has a designated fund to provide these discretionary bursaries, which will be made available to students in accordance within the terms of this policy.. Once these monies have been allocated during the year the School will not be able to make any further grants until the new academic year.

2.3. Students making a new application for Free School Meals should contact Warwickshire Country Council for validation of eligibility and the school will be informed directly.

3. Discretionary Bursary Policy – eligibility

3.1. To be eligible to be considered for a Discretionary Bursary you must meet the following criteria:

(a) You must be at least 16 and under 19 on the 31st August in the academic year in which you start a programme of study

(b) You must be on a full time programme of study

(c) You must maintain 95% attendance and meet behaviour standards as set out by the School, including complying with the terms of the Post-16 Enrolment Agreement which all students are required to sign.

(d) Meet the required residency requirements.

3.2. Provided the criteria above are met, eligibility for a student bursary is then dependent mainly upon household income. Evidence of household income will be required. See Appendix for further details.

3.3. Students experiencing other financial hardship or barriers to participation in 16-19 education may also be considered.

3.4. The bursary fund made available to the School is limited, and will vary from year to year. The School's ability to make distributions to students will depend upon how much money the School receives, and how many students apply in any given year.

3.5. Students eligible for a Bursary will be able to make requests for the Fund to cover the cost of the following, subject to the published financial limits in appendix A and as stipulated on the 16-19 Bursary Fund Application Form:

(a) Travel costs to and from school when the student lives over 2 miles away.
(b) Uniform, in line with our uniform policy.
(c) Further help with childcare costs for those young parents in receipt of Care to Learn whose costs exceed the weekly maximum rates for that scheme.
(d) Books, laptops and equipment necessary for their studies. The School will wherever possible acquire the books and equipment for the student, rather than making funds available to the student to purchase them. Students in receipt of the Discretionary Bursary should therefore check with the school before making any purchase connected with their studies.
(e) Meal Credits
(f) Travel costs and expenses for interviews and University visits where not covered by other bursaries or allowances.
(g) Travel Costs and meal credits for industrial placements.
(h) UCAS fees.
(i) Essential field trips to achieve or support study programme goals or course objectives

3.6. In exceptional circumstances, the School may consider other requests for support. Any such decisions will be made by the Head Teacher, Head of Sixth Form and the Finance Manager.

3.7. Laptops, text books and other reusable resources purchased with bursary funds remain to the property of the school and should be returned on completion of the study programme.

3. How to Apply

3.1. The application is for the academic year. Students should ideally apply no later than the specified date given each year. Later applications may be considered when a student's household circumstances changes.

3.2. Students should complete the appropriate sections of the 16-19 Bursary Fund Application Form and submit as outlined on the form.

3.3. Students will need to provide appropriate evidence to support their application, as set out in the application form.

3.4. Once students have had the Discretionary Bursary approved, they can request further grants of money from the Fund as required.

3.5. Application Forms are available from the Sixth Form and the school website.

3.6. All applications for the Post-16 Bursary will be considered and determined by the Head of Sixth Form, Head Teacher and Finance Manager.

4. Payment of the Bursary

4.1. Bursary payments are based on each student's individual circumstances and their actual financial need. Flat rate payments will not be made.

4.2. Wherever possible the School will make purchases directly on behalf of the student. Where this is not possible payment will be made by BACS payment direct to the student's bank account.

4.3. Before making any payments directly to students, the School will require production of relevant receipts / invoices /official estimates /evidence of need.

4.4. Continued receipt of bursary support will be subject to attendance, good behaviour and compliance with the Sixth Form Learner Agreement. We reserve the right to cease support with bursary funds if these conditions are not met.

5. Appeals

5.1. In the event that you wish to appeal any decision in relation to the bursary, the school's Complaints policy should be followed. This is available on the school website.

6. Changes and Review

6.1. Students and their parents/carers must make the school aware of any changes in their circumstances which may affect their eligibility for a Discretionary Bursary.

6.2. This Bursary Policy will be reviewed on a biennial basis to ensure that the objectives of the policy are met.

Appendix

Financial limits for 2026-27

Discretionary Bursary

Household income

Applications will be considered where household income is £35,000 or below per annum, or where households are in receipt of Universal Credit. Evidence of household income is required.
The School may consider requests which exceed the household income cap or other exceptional circumstances create a financial barrier to participation.

All bursaries

Home to School Travel costs

In order to be eligible for support with travel costs, students must live at least 2 miles away from school.
The support provided will be by the most cost-effective method, which will either be a travel pass (public transport) or travel expenses (mileage costs to travel by car or motorbike) paid into their bank account.

Mileage costs are capped at a maximum of £1200 per academic year and will be paid in accordance with HMRC mileage rates.

Uniform Allowance

Students may claim the cost of uniform purchased in line with our uniform policy to a maximum of:
£150 in Year 12
-£100 in Year 13
. Receipts must be provided.

Meals

Students requesting support with meals at school will be given a daily allowance to spend in the school canteen, in line with the school's Free School Meals allowance.